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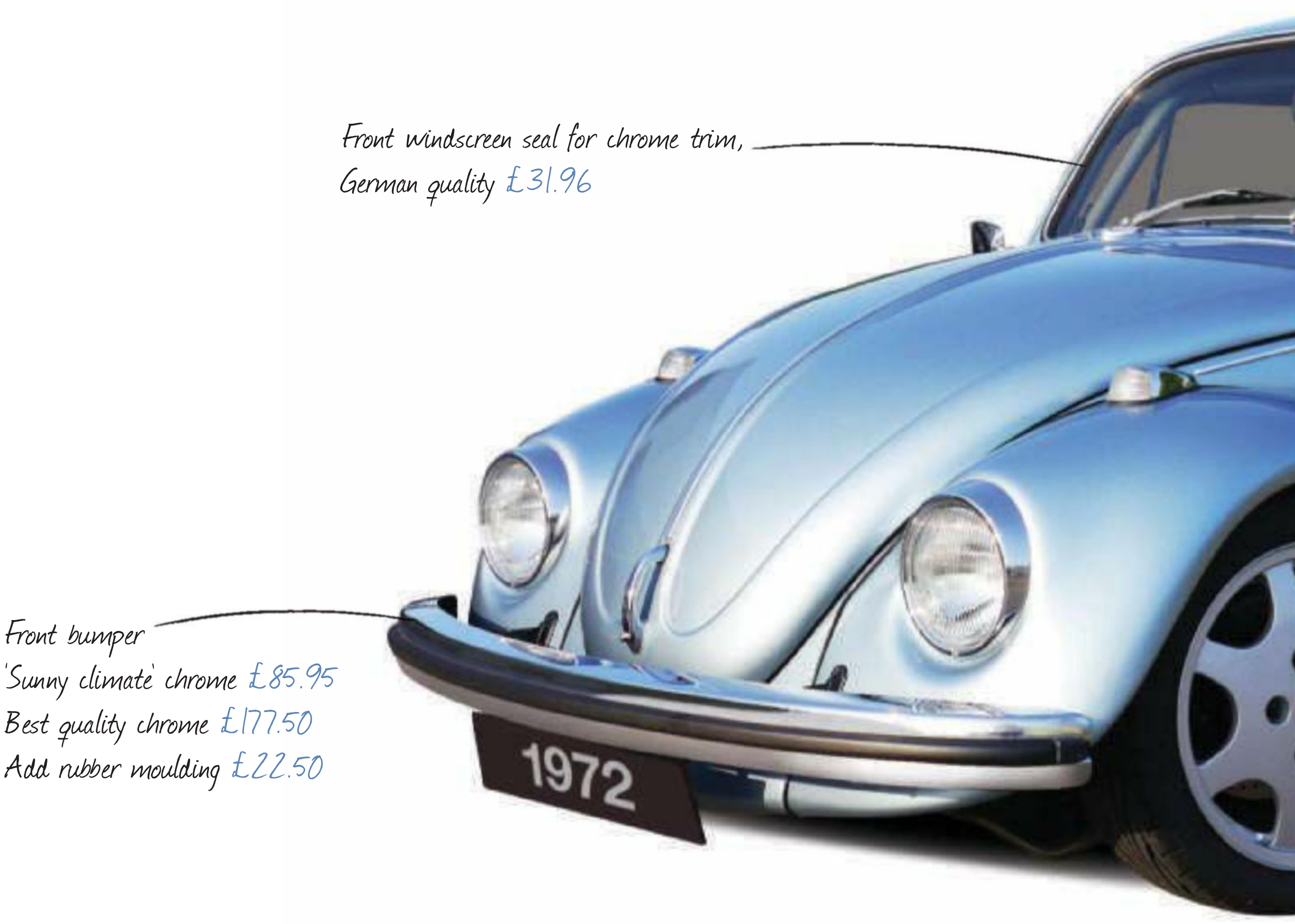
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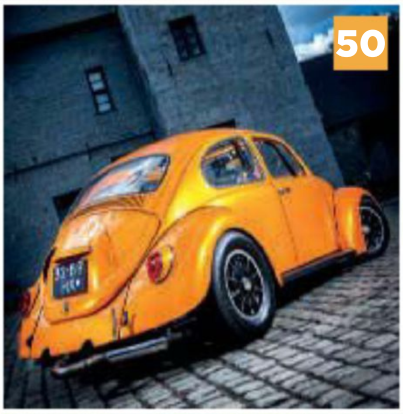
CONTENTS
JUNE 2016



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THIS MONTH

6 News
A change of address at *Volks* HQ

7 Pye Eyed
Put your money where your mouth is

8 Events
The boys from Brazil

12 Products
Wipers, air and Bay bits

15 Letters
Say what you think. We'll disagree

18 Readers' rides
Your cars, your stories

98 Under the Gunn
J Stewart Perkins. Who?

FEATURE CARS

24 Cal Looker
A German's 'Looker

32 Custom Beetle
The '90s brought into the '00s

40 Patina Split
Rough on top, slick underneath

50 Cal Looker
He's all about the horsepower

SHOW REPORTS

58 Le Bug Show
All the fun of the Spa

64 Freddy Files
The best time to visit Ninove

PRACTICAL VOLKSWORLD

72 Staff cars
The Ed's daily's nearly there

76 Staff cars
Cathal falls (back) in love

80 Staff cars
No more off roading for Steve

84 How to
Doing the dynamo swap

NEWS

Email your news to volksworld@timeinc.com

WELCOME TO THE MAG

If you've already paid a visit to pages 64-69 you'll have seen that I made my first trip to Ninove this year. And, by jingo, it won't be my last.

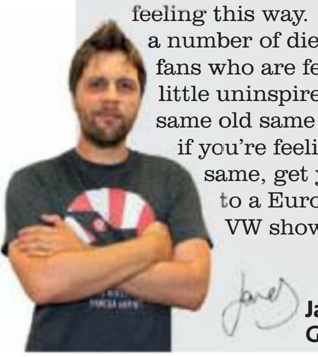
I don't know what it is about European shows but, whenever I come back from one, like say EB-I, I feel totally energised about everything VW and can't wait to crack on with my own car. Actually, scratch that, I know exactly what it is, everything is just, well, different.

Take my recent trip to The Freddy Files for a start. When I arrived at the brewery on Saturday it felt like any UK show, but in a cooler setting and with premium strength beer. Looking around, the majority of VWs were patina Buses. So, standard show viewing these days. And that's when I started clocking number plates. Pretty much every patina Bus hailed from the UK, and all of the other rides that got me twitching were European. And shiny.

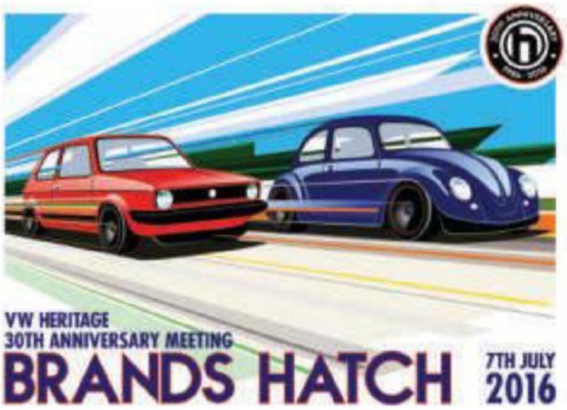
Sunday in Ninove served to reinforce what I was thinking. Yes, patina is still popular on the Continent, but the vast majority of cars cruising into the town were shiny, and not Buses, but Beetles, Ghias and Type 3s, too.

So, is patina dead? Has Europe discovered this first and no one has let us know? Or is the patina Bus thing just a UK phenomenon? I couldn't say for certain, and the patina brigade are sure to argue otherwise, but it was hugely refreshing to see a show packed with air-cooled VWs that weren't rusty or Bus shaped. And I say that as someone who loves a bit of patina and edits two Camper mags on the side.

I know I'm not alone in feeling this way. I know a number of diehard VW fans who are feeling a little uninspired by the same old same old. So, if you're feeling the same, get yourself to a European VW show. ■



James Peene
Group editor



30 years of Heritage

VW Heritage will be 30 years old this year and, to celebrate, the company is holding a party at Brands Hatch race circuit on July 7 from 3-10pm.

Entry is free to all Volkswagen Group vehicles and all cars will be automatically entered into the show 'n' shine! There will be prizes and trophies for the top five air-cooled and top five water-cooled cars, as well as a special prize for furthest travelled.

VW Heritage has hired the track for the evening too so, if you fancy putting down some rubber on the world famous Brands Hatch Indy Circuit, taster sessions for all levels of driver will be available from £30.

Live djs will provide the backing track to the evening with a mix of tunes to suit all tastes, and there are licensed bars and restaurants on site to fuel and lubricate your evening.

There will be goody bags for the first 500 cars through the gates, so arrive early to avoid disappointment, get the best spot and grab some cool free stuff. See you there.

Head on over to vwheritage.com/30 for more information.

KELSEY media

Moving news

Some of you will already know this by now, but we can now officially announce that *VolksWorld*, together with its sister magazines, *Camper&Bus* and *VWt*, and The *VolksWorld* Show and The *Camper&Bus* Show at Eastnor Castle have a new owner and a new location. Our new boss is Kelsey Media, who publish a wide range of motoring magazines and run several shows in the classic and performance car market, so are a great fit with what we do.

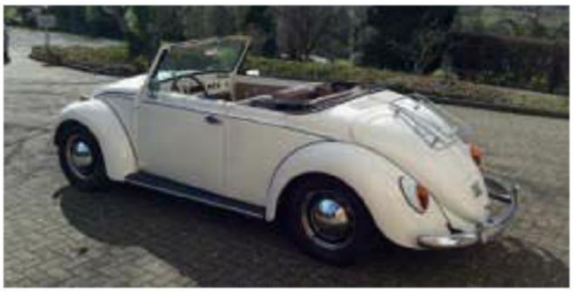
While undoubtedly there will be some changes in the months ahead, it's nice to be back in a motoring-focussed environment once again, working with a nice bunch of like-minded people. Our new location is Cudham in the Kent countryside, but all our web and social media sites are staying the same for the time being.

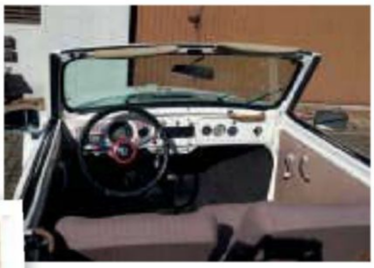
One thing to note is our new telephone and email addresses. Now, if you need contact us, call 01959 541444 or email volksworld.ed@kelsey.co.uk for editorial and shows@kelsey.co.uk for marketing and the shows.

Discovered

Claus Missing from Germany has gone and done it again! The man behind the Hebmüller and early Karmann Convertible register is always on the lookout for cars. He previously found an absolute gem of a Heb in Switzerland, which we featured in the magazine, and now he's found another one.

The new car is chassis number 14-00684, so a late car in Heb terms. It was found in Switzerland and has been with the second owner for the last 51 years, during which time it has had a few updates, including a 1960's dashboard, tail and headlights and wing-top indicators. Claus told us he has no immediate plans to replace these elements, he's just happy to have the car!





^ Amazingly, Claus is only the third owner of this Hebmüller

< It's common for early cars to have light upgrades, but a complete dash swap is more unusual

VolksWorld
Graphical
Restored
High 'n' Mighty
Dynam
Smokin'

Past glories

How much are you prepared to spend to re-live your youth?

> Outdated styling cues, unusual colour choice and very personal mods

This month has thrown up a number of interesting points for discussion, not least our recent change of ownership and move from the badlands of Croydon to a restored tithe barn deep in the garden of England. It's marginally nearer my house, a much nicer view and business as usual for the time being, so I'll save talk of that for another day.

One of the other subjects I had been considering for further comment has been touched upon by my learned colleague in his editorial column, which leaves me with a topic I have mentioned in the past, but is particularly relevant in the context of one of this month's feature cars. It's a question that is beginning to rear its head in the custom car world, and is one that is guaranteed to divide opinion like no other. Are we headed for a '70's / '80's / '90's (delete as applicable) revival? There are already clear and present signs of it in the modified VW Transporter scene, where airbrushing is making a big impression these days. The subject matter may be different, with *Star Wars* and *The Goonies* replacing *Bullitt* and *The French Connection*, but the method is the same. We may never again see real wood bumpers, but Fablon-wrapped ones are already popping up, and am I the only one that sees the fat boy side bar as the modern equivalent of the Thrush Outsider? From where I'm sitting, it's only a matter of time before someone cuts porthole windows into the side of their T4. And from there it's but a short step to deep button Dralon upholstery.

The modified air-cooled scene may not have quite the heritage to call upon that the Van scene does (though if you type 'Sweet Sensation VW' into Google you'll see the Beetle didn't entirely escape the darkest period of all in UK customising) but there's still a veritable well of influence to draw from, should you be so inclined. The question is why? Is there any merit to restoring, or building a copy of, a Beetle from our past? A few people have now done it, including Pete Nice with Warren G's old car that you can read about in this issue, but we live in a different time now, and it's very hard to go backwards. As Ivan makes a point of saying in the feature, cars like these are being restored to a higher standard than they were built in the first place. Which inevitably means they're costing more money to do. If, as reported, Pete has sunk £20k into the resurrection of 'Warren's car', he's surely spent a significant sum more than Warren did in the first place to end up with a car that, to be brutally frank, ain't worth it. And by that I mean it's not worth that much to sell, as the market for such a car – with outdated styling cues, unusual colour colour and very personal modifications – is incredibly small. Had the same amount of time, effort and money been put into turning that car back into a stock '66 Beetle, or a predictable Resto Cal on detailed 'Fuchs', it would be an easy sell. And before you say it, I know that's not the point.

Internet voices

I'm sure there were plenty of enthusiastic voioces on the various internet forums urging Pete to restore it. We regularly do it to each other here in the office about cars we find for sale. It's easy to spend someone else's money. Not so easy to step up and do it with your own money. Along similar lines, there's a letter in our mail pages this month saying it would have been much better if James had let someone who appreciates the history of his '60 buy it instead. The point is, whoever these people are, they didn't buy it. That car was advertised for sale for months, and none of those 'deserving enthusiasts' opened their wallets.

Back to the '90s though. Don't get me wrong, I admire what Pete, and others that have restored or cloned similar cars, have done, and a little bit of me quite likes the dewey-eyed nostalgia of seeing cars from our past brought back to life again. I just don't want to pay for it, or own one. Having said that, there was one British VW I might, in a moment of madness, have considered buying and rebuilding, but thankfully someone else has already done it, thus saving me the considerable amount of time and money its resurrection undoubtedly consumed. Cheers Russell! The reason I would have even considered buying that car though is I feel a certain personal affinity with it. I didn't build it and I never owned it, but I did have pictures of it on my wall as a youngster, spent hours and hours poring over its every detail and styled my first VW after it. Sort of. So much so, it was almost a disappointment when I first saw the car for real as I had built it up to almost mythical status in my head. And do you know the funniest thing of all? When the freshly restored car was debuted at The *VolksWorld* Show two years ago, a Frenchman who has as much history in the VW scene as anyone I know didn't even recognise the car, going as far as commenting that it wasn't exactly groundbreaking. Oh, the irony.

Will we see any more '90's show cars brought back from the dead? I know of one other local to me that may or may not see the light of day again. We gave the owner one of those godawful Thump! Thump! steering wheels for it, so hopefully not! That's a Joke Sam, okay?

This Brasilia is owned by our good friend, Boy, and is papped wherever it goes

A cool mix of cars and styles. These guys and girls really love their VWs

Brazilian flare

A gathering of like-minded Brazilian VW folk

Words Daniel Gonzalez **Photos** D&C Fotographia

Brazilian's aren't just huge football fans, they're also massive fans of Volkswagens, too. But you'd already know that from the cars gathered together on these pages. Actually, what you see here is a photoshoot on the cars owned by air-cooled friends that were brought together from the Volks Steel, Fuskeiros, Volks Style and Old Style Volks Club.

Our Brazilian man on the ground, Daniel Gonzalez, reported back to us, "Our passion for all things Volkswagen grows day by day, and through it we make new friends, and that's how the idea for these gatherings came about – to bring together different people of all ages, but united by the same shared passion for VWs.

"We believe that passion has to be passed from one generation to the next, and we do that through the cars we drive and park together at shows and club get togethers like this. We preserve these experiences for posterity by taking photographs of every car that comes to each one of our gatherings." ■

> "Our passion for all things Volkswagen grows day by day"

Brasilias were built from 1973 to 1982. This one is owned by Kleber

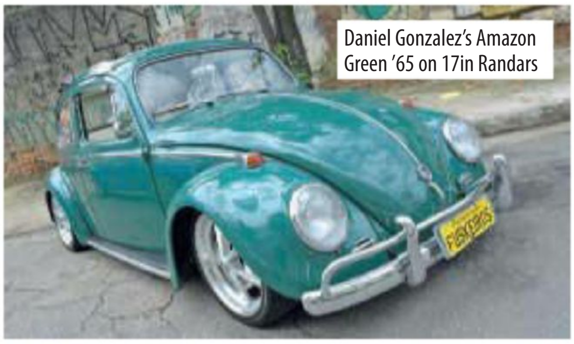
CLUB SCENE

NAME: D&C Fotographia

WHY?: The idea came about when some friends decided to record local VW gatherings for posterity

MEMBERS: Seven (full time)

SOCIAL MEDIA: See more at www.facebook.com/decfogrphia.com



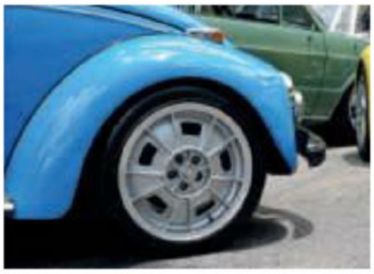
Daniel Gonzalez's Amazon Green '65 on 17in Randars

EVENTS AND CLUBS

Let us know about your VW event or club – email volksworld.ed@kelsey.co.uk

∧∨ Not a factory convertible, but this big 'screen Bug now runs Porsche rims and a turbocharged 1600 motor

∨ This blue '74 belongs to Uncle Al (Alcindo) and is scooted along by a 1500cc engine



› Inspired by Ferrari Dino rims, these wheels were made in Brazil from 1968-'73. They were 14s originally, but have just been re-released in 17-inch diameter. Pretty cool, huh?

‹ Diego Manza's Pastel Green '61 looks great on those mega-banded steels and whitewall flaps

∨ Daniel Mendes inherited this '66 from his grandmother. Wheels and accessories were added later

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Selling a new product? email volksworld.ed@kelsey.co.uk

'58-'64 wiper arms

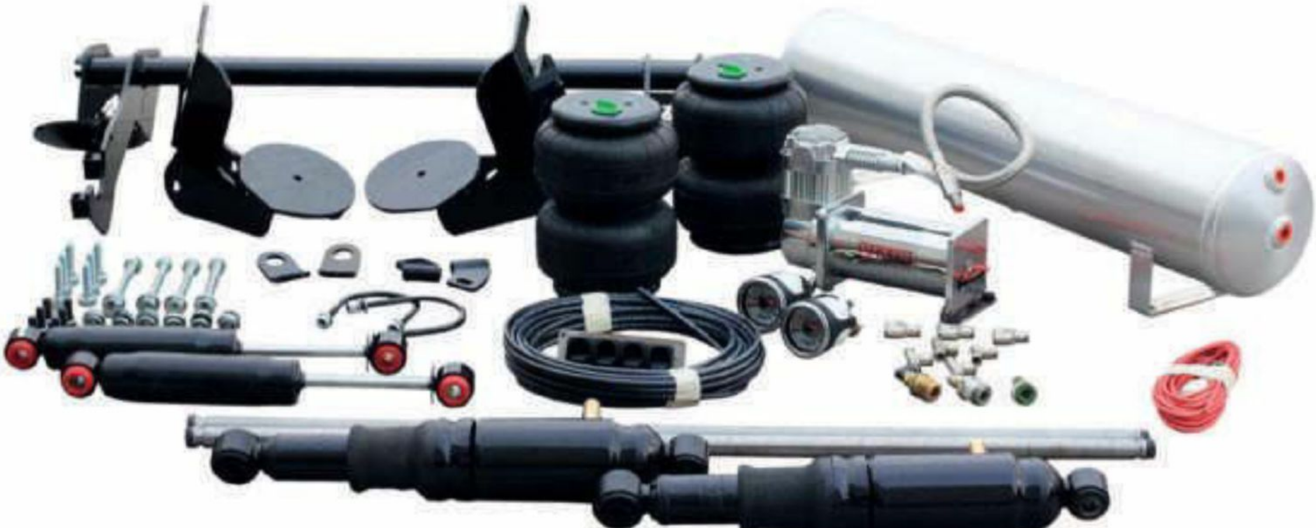
From: **www.justkampers.com** **Price:** **£14.94 (each)**

As pathetic as the wipers are on an early big window Beetle, they're a must-have item. If you need replacement arms to hold the tiny rubber strips that pretend to be wiper blades for your Bug, Just Kampers are stocking these quality items. Treat yourself and buy two

Beetle air ride kit

From: **www.limebug.net** **Price:** **£1,895**

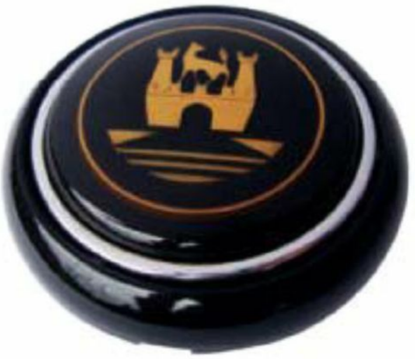
If you're looking to fit air ride to the front and rear of your '50-'79 Beetle or Ghia, Limebug has the answer. This bolt-on kit requires no welding and contains everything you need. It uses air shocks and through rods for the front and 2,500lb air bags for the rear, offering over seven inches of travel. Control is via manual paddle valves, or you can upgrade the kit to a V2 digital controller



VW Bus cool box

From: **www.themonsterfactory.com** **Price:** **£300**

Officially licenced by VW, this new pull-along drinks cooler is 36.5 x 17 x 15.5in, making it similiar in size to a Radio Flyer, but a whole world better at keeping your bevvies chilled whist wandering around VW shows. Made from pressed steel, the entire roof is a lid covering an insulated area that can hold up to 24 450ml bottles, along with heaps of ice. There's even a drainage hole in the back to make cleaning it out a cinch



Wolfsburg crest horn push

From: **www.aircooledaccessories.com**
Price: **£34.99**

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Early Bay top column bearing

From: **www.vwheritage.com** **Price:** **£17.05**

Baggy steering? Imprecise course adjustment? The pesky spring and collet that retains the ball bearings in Early Bay steering columns are notoriously troublesome. They're no longer available as a VW part, but this needle roller bearing is a direct replacement and, as an added bonus, will improve steering feel to boot. The original spring and collet are no longer required. Fits '68-'74 Bay Windows with chassis numbers up to - 214 2164 060

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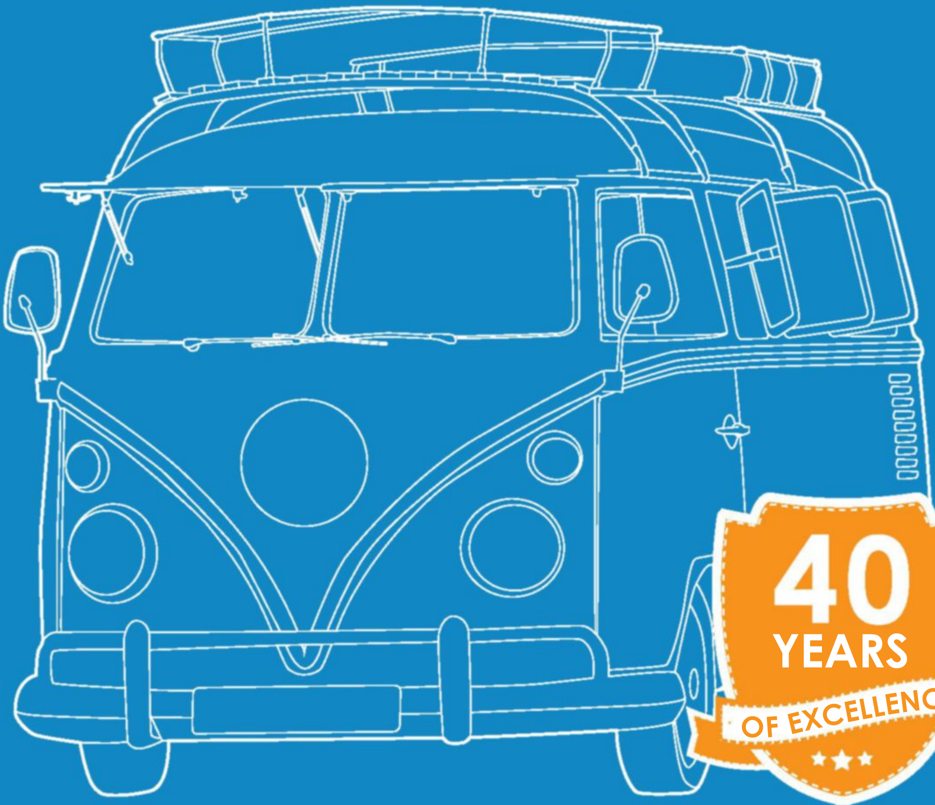

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Letter of the month

Originally sold new in Switzerland, Peter's Oval now calls Ireland home

Garage Cornavin

Peter Murphy, Galway, Ireland

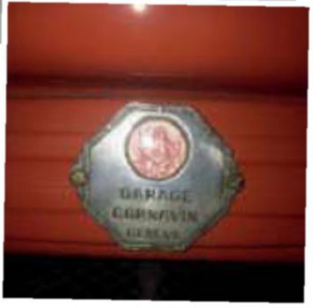
Hi James, I've just being reading last month's magazine and I noticed in your article the dealer plaque that came with your latest purchase.

I recently bought a 1956 Oval here in Ireland and it too has the same dealer plaque as your '60. My car was imported into Ireland in 1970 from Switzerland, too. It's a small world. Do you have any further detail on this dealership?

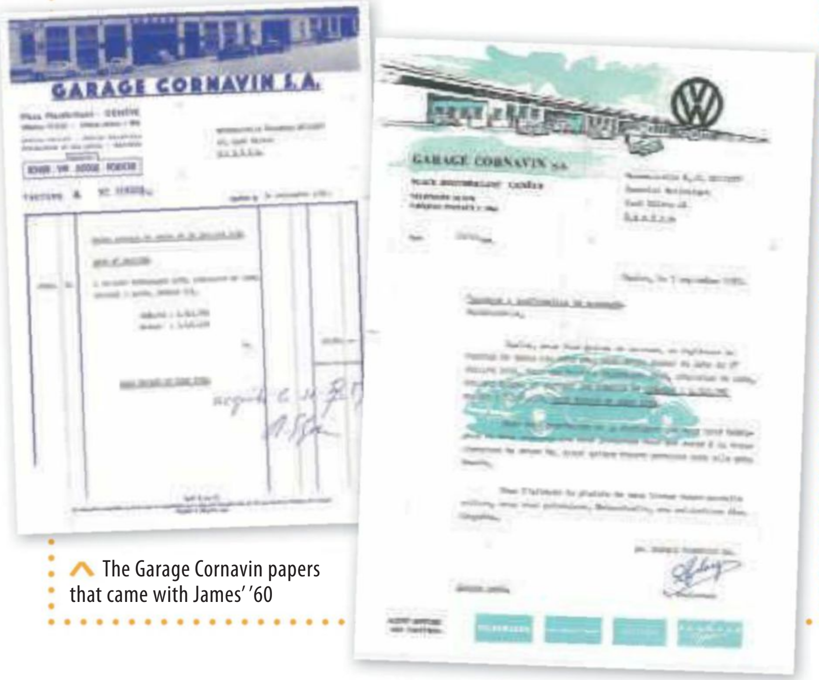
Love the magazine by the way. I would love to see a few more original, unmodified cars grace the pages alongside your regular stuff.

Keep up the good work.

Hi Peter, thanks for the email. Obviously I think that's really cool, but I'm sure I'm not alone. I love the dealer plaque on my car, but sadly, I don't really have any more details on the dealership itself. What I do have is the original bill of sale that came with my car on some Garage Coravin headed note paper. See below. It gives an address, telephone number and an idea of what the dealership looked like in 1959. We love an unmodified car here, and have some really nice examples coming your way soon, so keep your eyes peeled. – JP



^ St. Christopher on the dealer plaque is a nice touch



GARAGE CORNAVIN S.A.

GARAGE CORNAVIN S.A.

^ The Garage Cornavin papers that came with James' '60

Why, why, why?

John Faulkner, Northants

Hello *VolksWorld*, I've just read with disbelief what James Peene is doing to his Beetle. In the last issue's project reports he writes, "It's an ex-museum piece with a fully documented 64,000 kilometres on the clock." So how on earth can someone who purports to be a VW enthusiast ruin it by modifying it? It would have been much better if he'd let someone who appreciates it buy it instead. Not impressed.

Thanks for writing in John. As I wrote last month, I knew I'd get some flack from the stock Nazis when they saw what I was doing, but then it's no one but the owner's business what anyone does with a car. No one else stepped up and bought it when it was for sale and it's not like it's rare anyway. Besides, everything I'm doing can be easily returned to stock, and what I am doing is putting a car back on the road that has not turned a wheel in decades. – JP

Keep your wig on! No Volkswagens were harmed in the process of making this ride…

Shine a light

A J Potts, via email

Hello *VolksWorld*, I have just read the letter in last month's issue about the mystery spotlight, and I think the door-mounted search / spot lamp may have been used by the driver to find the street name and house number that they are looking for during the night, or if they where on dark country roads to find the road signs at cross roads so that they would not get lost. I hope this is of some help.

Kind regards,

Thanks for the email A J Potts. We were aware what the lamp was for, we just didn't know who made it. Similar, more elaborate items were used by the police in the USA, and still are for that matter. Do a search for 'cop light' on eBay.com and you'll usually find a number of them for sale. I bought one from Unity to fit on my Bus a long time ago, but never had the cojones to drill the hole to fit it. – JP

> Unity police lights are cool, but mounting one on a VW isn't easy. Where on earth would you fit it?

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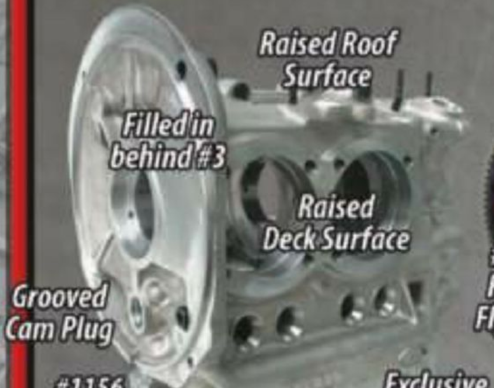
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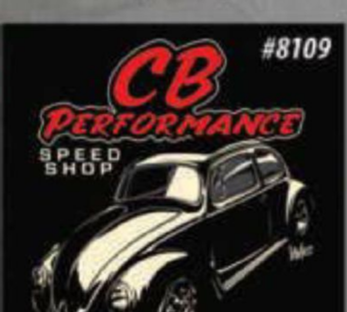
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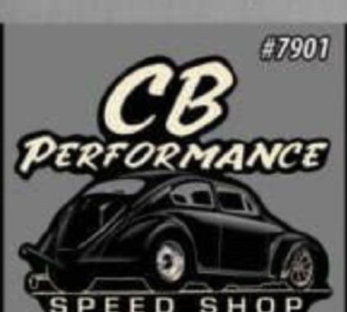
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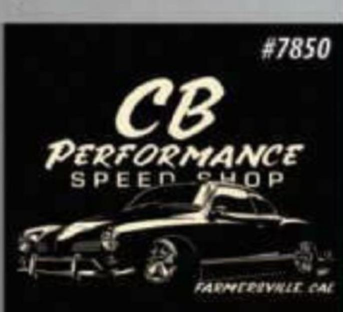
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Car of the month

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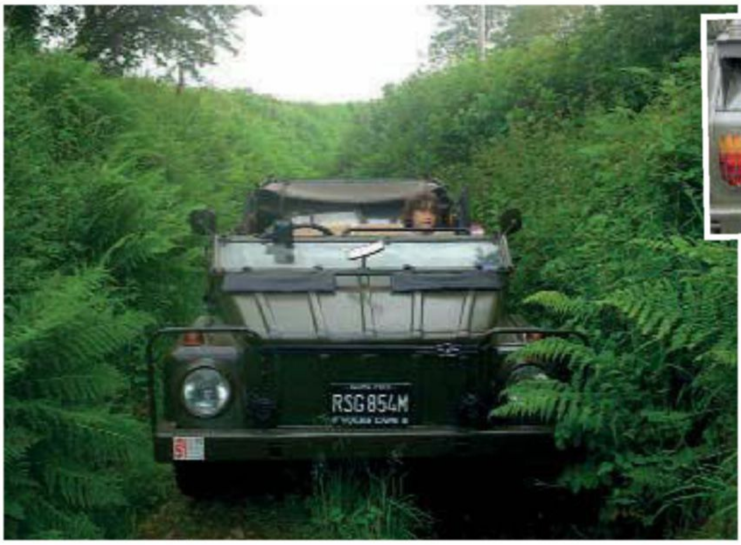


Only in Devon could this be your regular route home from work! That's Nicolas' son and co-pilot in the passenger seat

...and here's daughter, Ruby, and mates also enjoying the car

Nicholas Vero, 1975 Trekker

Hi there, I've been reading *VolksWorld* from its start, but never been in it so thought this might be the perfect opportunity! We have owned this Type 182 for over five years now and it's my fifth air-cooled VW since starting driving in 1987.

I decided a Trekker would be a great VW to own, so started to look about six years ago. After being disappointed looking at cars that were too far gone for a regular driver, or needed too much work, I spotted what looked like a decent example online. Only problem was it was in Newcastle! So, starting at 8am I drove with my mad uncle Dave to Exeter airport, caught a 'plane to Newcastle (after they refused to let Dave through check in with a bag of tools and emergency gaffer tape), then a taxi to the seller's house.

> "The options for driving a Trekker are endless"

The Trekker was not quite as good as I thought from the pictures, but much better than any others I'd seen, and as it would cost too much to get a hotel and fly back, we haggled and bought it. It had had a small fortune spent on it, with bills to prove, and the seller, John, threw in a number of spares, including sills and wings. He had driven 181s in Germany when he was stationed there in the army in the '70s and had restored this right-hand drive version as a tribute to his time then.

We checked the oil, filled her up with fuel and drove the 400+ miles to Exeter airport to pick up the other car, then home to Bideford. The drive took about eight hours, with stops, but we cruised at 70mph, got 25mpg and didn't use any oil. Even better, the car's heater worked well so we were toasty all the way. Result!

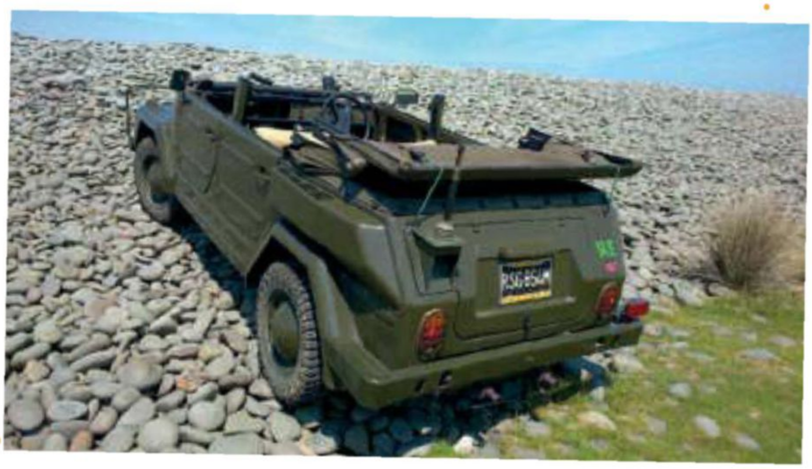
Since then, I have regularly driven and enjoyed the Trekker. I like the look of them low, but it's not happening to this one as it is too much fun at the correct height, and the off-road tyres make light work of the green lanes on my journey home from work every day.

Since owning it I've stripped the front panel and offside to bare metal and repainted them, fitted new shocks, replaced the offside jacking point and rear offside wing, put a new top bearing in the steering column and have stealth fitted some decent 6 x 4 speakers under the rear seats. My friend and local VW legend, Carl Klinkenberg of Beetlebank, helped with a tune up.

The options when driving a Trekker are endless – roof up, doors on, windows off, roof down or all doors off and 'screen down, goggles on – only a Trekker driver knows that feeling! The forum and details at www.vwtrekker.co.uk has been a great source of information and help. Thanks guys!

The history of the car is quite interesting, too. It was first registered in the UK in 1992, but it left the factory in October 1974, painted L11E Lemon Yellow with a black hood, destined for Mexico! I would love to know where it lived from 1974 to 1992. It was then used by a boatyard for a few years to move stuff about before John bought it.

Further plans are just to continue looking after and driving it, and to fit some rear seat belts when I have time. It's the best VW I've ever owned. I love it!



On the Vero's local beach at Westward Ho!

Laura Johnson, 1970 Beetle

Laura inherited her love of Beetles from her father, Marcus. He'd initially been into old Fords but, when petrol prices escalated a few years ago, he decided a 1972 Beetle that had undergone an LPG conversion would be ideal as a daily driver and for his commute to work. "Laura had been dragged to car shows for a good many years prior to this, and had never really shown that much interest in classic cars, but the Beetle changed all that," he told us with a grin. "I thought the change of heart might wear off after a while, but it didn't. If anything, Laura became even more a fan of Beetles as time went on."

I fact, it soon became obvious that Laura wanted to own a Beetle of her own, so the search was on to find a suitable car. "We went looking for a pretty much stock one without too many modifications, in order to keep the insurance premiums reasonable," continues Marcus. Eventually, a 1300cc 1970 Beetle was found in Northampton and Laura settled into Beetle ownership with aplomb. The car had been repainted at some point, but there's still some areas that Laura would like to have repainted in the future. Fortunately, they have a friend who is a car painter, which should help keep the price down.

Not simply happy to own and run just a classic Beetle, Laura has stayed loyal to VWs and her daily driver is a 2000 New Beetle, so she now enjoys the best of both worlds. She's happy to admit Beetles have become something of an obsession, and looking after her two 'babies' and attending Volkswagen shows goes some way to satisfying that passion.

The car's had some exterior paintwork in its time, but that interior paint looks original to us. Under-dash tray and tunnel basket offer plenty of storage room

1970 was the last year before through-flow ventilation was introduced, so no crescent-shaped vents behind the rear side windows

Doukakis Ignatios, '67

Hello *VolksWorld*! I have loved Beetles since I was a student at Northeastern University, and I always wanted to buy one. When I returned to Greece, I found a 1950 Karmann Beetle Convertible and began restoring it. Following that car, I had a succession of Volkswagens – a 1963, a 1971, a 1968 and then a 1969, which became my daily driver.

Finally, though, I found the 1967 Beetle I had been looking for. The car had been owned from new by a doctor, and he sold it to me because he couldn't drive it any more. Even though I have kept two of the other Beetles – the 1950 Convertible and the 1969 – a 1967 model was the one I had always wanted. I started rebuilding it in January 2013 and completed it in October 2014.

The engine is the original 1300cc and I only had it serviced. The paint was done by a friend, the upholstery and carpets were replaced, the electrics refreshed and the wheels painted. All that remains is to keep my promise to take the former owner for a ride in my new car! I am very happy that I now own these three Beetles.

THE RESTORATION

The car as bought. One owner from new

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Soapbox Challenge

After the fantastic success of last year, the Soapbox Derby returns again for 2016. With a new course, with extra challenges added, the Eastnor Castle all-action Soapbox Derby is sure to be one of the highlights of the weekend. We would like to encourage as many of you as possible to build a racer and participate on the day. Maybe you could get together with some mates and build the ride to beat all others? It need not take you months, some of the best entries last year were built in a weekend. Before you start building your noble steed, or your chariot of power, check out the details on our website. Let battle commence!

Clubs

If your VW club is interested in coming to the show *en masse*, we are offering large club plots so you can all camp together and save your members some cash. Check out the show website for details

Live entertainment

We're lining up the perfect mix of music to soundtrack your weekend. This doesn't mean banging techno or hardcore dubstep, but a great selection that is guaranteed to get everyone up on their feet. Keep checking back on the website for updates to find out what we have lined up for you this year

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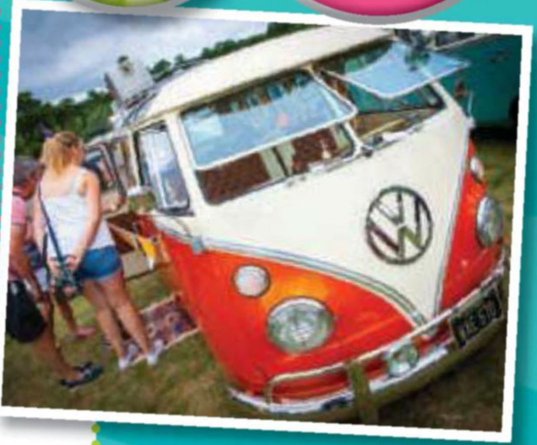

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T4-T6 Transporters

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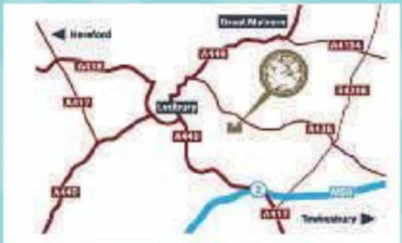
Directions from London.



Take M4 west, exit at junction 15 (Swindon), then follow A419 / A417 to Cirencester and Gloucester (dual carriageway). Before Gloucester, exit A417 onto M5 north (towards Birmingham) then, at junction 11A, continue as if from north or south

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Exit M5 at junction 8 onto M50, exit M50 at junction 2, then follow A417 to Ledbury. Follow the brown tourist signs to Eastnor Castle via bypass and through Ledbury town centre onto A449 (signed Worcester and Malvern). After one mile, turn right onto A438 (signed Tewkesbury and Eastnor). The entrance to the Deer Park is on the left-hand side after one mile

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Tyrannosaurus Mex

It may look like a 1970's Beetle, but Christian Zickert's car was built in Mexico in 1984 but is now running on steroids

Words Georg Otto **Photos** Sven Zimmermann

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Vorsicht

Subtle looks combined with serious power (in this case Type 4). The very essence of California Look

For quite some time Mexican Beetles weren't exactly what enthusiasts went looking for. Everybody it seemed preferred pre-'67 cars, with their sloping headlights and blade bumpers. If you couldn't find one, no matter, you simply turned your late model into one. But later Bugs have become more and more accepted for their own merits in the last 10 years, because they were still made with the typical German quality and reliability in mind. Volkswagens from South America had a reputation for suffering from corrosion quicker than European cars as the rust prevention methods employed are said to be worse (or non-existent). Some even claim the paint isn't as thick as on European models. Well, we think it is, as always, a matter of maintenance. And proof of this is Christian Zickert's '84 Beetle, which still wears its first coat of paint and has never been welded! The reason for that may be its history. It used to belong to an elderly lady, who bought it new some 32 years ago. The car was always garaged, never driven in the winter and had only 40,000kms (around 27,000 miles) on the speedo when it changed hands the first time in 2003. "My parents bought it from the first owner and my dad had plans to sell it on, but then things changed. I turned 18 the same year and my grandma planned to give me her 1303 Super Beetle for my birthday. But then she decided to keep it and drive it a bit longer, so my parents stepped in and made the Mexican Beetle my present instead," recalls Christian.

"Later Bugs have become more accepted in the last 10 years"

TECH INFO

BODY: 1984 Mexican Beetle, unrestored, first paint (Selvas Green LA6D), modified to look like a 70s Beetle

SUSPENSION: Stock front beam fitted with adjusters, stock heights out back, red (front) and yellow (rear) Koni shocks, front sway bar w/ urethan bushings, CSP torque bars, Type 3 calipers and drilled discs up front, Sebro drums in the rear, both with Porsche 5x130 mm PCD

WHEELS AND TYRES: Genuine Fuchs wheels, 4,5x15 and early 6x15 with 165/65

You need to know that Christian comes from a family heavily involved with cars, especially air-cooled Volkswagens. "My grandfather used to mill and lathe everything he needed and my dad inherited this talent. Both Rainer and his brother, Achim, started at the age of 15 to buy, repair and sell Beetles. They put everything in the engine bays of Beetles from Type 4 engines to 911 motors and gearboxes. In the '70s! When I was a little kid I spend quite some time with dad and my uncle in the garage, watching them working on their cars, or handling tools. That's definitely what got me hooked," explains the 31-year old. "I had the desire to own a Beetle too one day." That day was his 18th birthday. He had his driving licence already and couldn't wait to drive his new car.

Cal Look lust

Christian's initial influences came from his dad, who used to build and drive Beetles in the typical German '80's style, which meant Type 4 engines, flared wings and ATS wheels. But to this Christian added his own ideas, and used magazines like *VW Speed* and the internet as his sources of inspiration. "I really liked the American Cal Look cars and, of course, the vehicles of the German DFL VW Club, a gang heavily involved with that subtle west coast style. The only problem was I had a Mexican Beetle, with elephant's foot tail lights and a front bumper with integral indicators. Nothing wrong with it, just not very Cal Look. Don't get me

Extra VDO gauges for oil pressure and temperature have been added

A Gene Berg shifter is almost mandatory for a Cal Looker

You'll find an Auto Meter Monster tach and a shift light under the dash

The interior is almost stock, valorised by a pair of Cobra seats and a Moto Lita steering wheel

It took a lot of work, but Christian has very successfully completed the '84 to '70 conversion

wrong, I wasn't ungrateful, quite the contrary, I just had to think harder about how to convert my VW into a real Looker." Studying some books certainly helped, as he figured he could make the '84 look like a '70's Beetle with just a few modifications. "I started by sourcing a set of four genuine VW wings. The rears had the correct mounting holes for tombstone tail lights and the front ones for wing top indicators. All I had to do was paint them in the Selvas Green." The colour (code LA6D) is seldom seen on Beetles and really makes this one stand out in a crowd. "Only one real modification has been done to the body, and that is the rear apron. I filled the cut outs for the peashooters and, at the same time, made it removable." Other then that, almost everything stayed in place, including the side trim and quarter lights, but not the window trims. Christian also swapped the front bumper for one without indicator cut outs and the engine lid for one from a 1302 convertible, which then received a bubble to clear the obligatory 48s.

"My father had a spare 2.4-litre long block on the shelf"

Cal Look rake

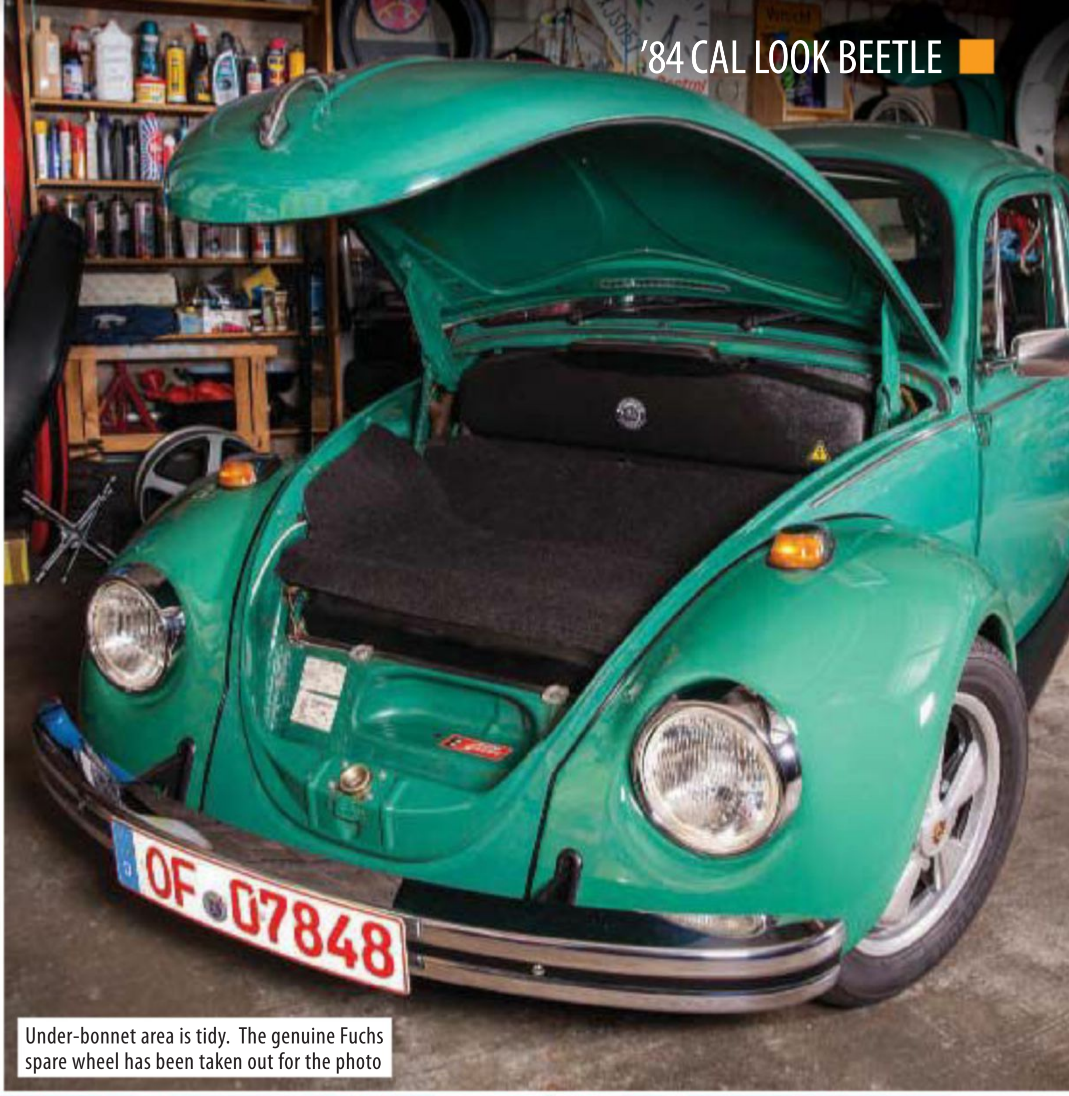
But before we check out the powerplant in the rear, let's first cast an eye over the chassis. "With a serious upgrade of the engine power in the back of my mind, I started working on the suspension." The typical Cal Look rake was achieved by using CSP adjusters, welded into the original Volkswagen beam. A set of drilled disc brakes with 5 x 130 PCD and Type 3 calipers replace the stock drums up front, flanked by Koni reds, an anti-roll bar and urethane bushings. Opposed to the lowered front, the rear end stayed at stock height and is equipped with a CSP torque bar, Koni yellow shocks and high quality Sebro brake drums, which came pre-drilled with the Porsche bolt pattern. "We took the gearbox out, fitted an ali side plate and heavy duty swing axle driveshafts. Gear ratios and everything else are stock," clarifies Christian. The icing on the cake are the genuine Porsche Fuchs, which measure 4.5 and six inch in width, with a diameter of 15 inch. Their offset is 42mm (front) and 36mm (rear). "I polished and painted them myself and wrapped them in 165/65 and 205/70 tyres," explains our proud owner.

TECH INFO

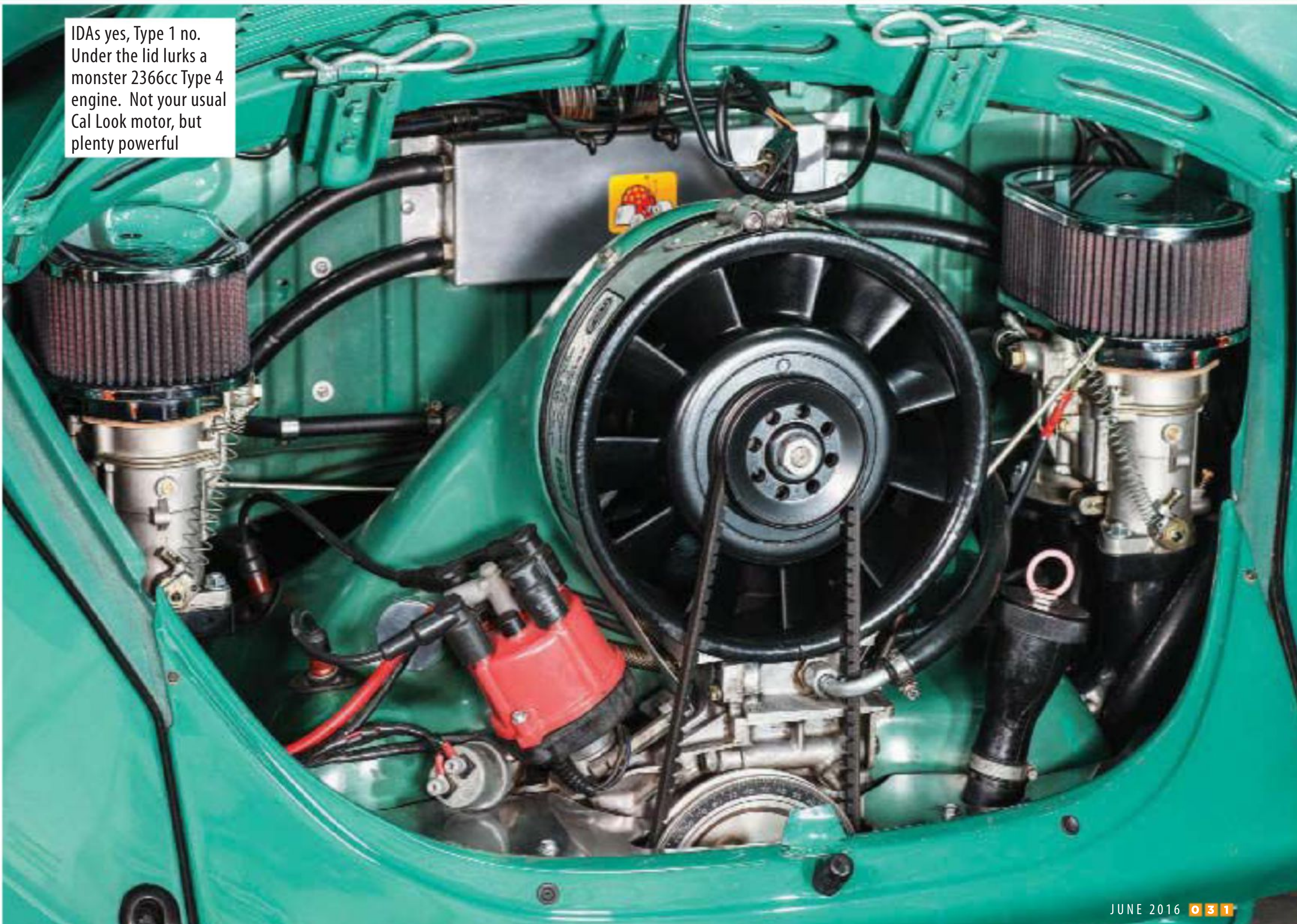
ENGINE: 2366cc Type 4; 71mm crank; 103mm pistons; ported and polished heads with 47 and 39mm valves; 10.3:1 compression; 324° cam; 48IDA Webers on modified manifolds; MSD 6AL ignition; Porsche-style fan shroud; 44mm A1 header, 2.5in CSP single muffler

Type 4 power

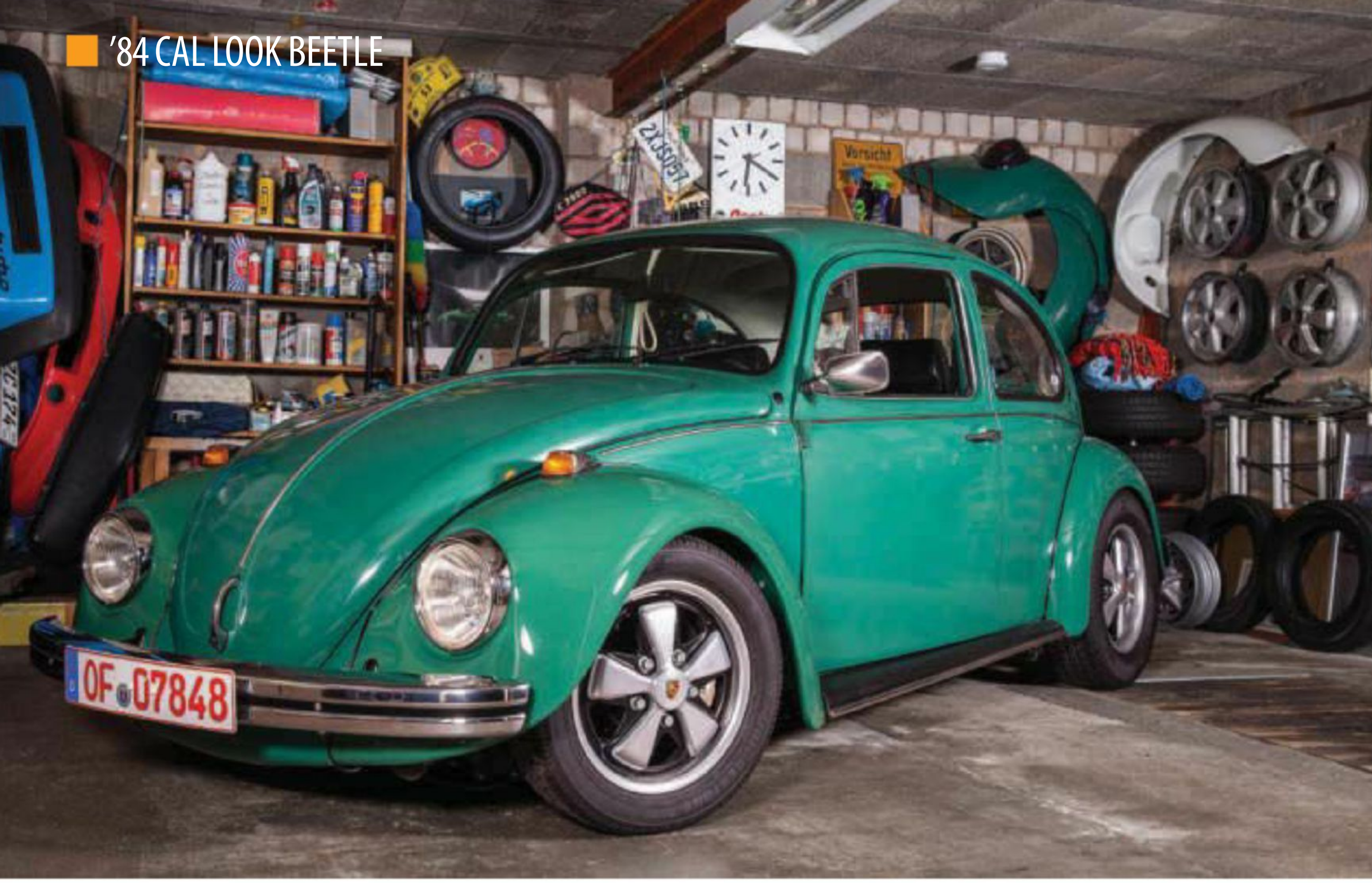
As is well documented now, Cal Look Beetles have traditionally relied on strong Type 1 engines, but not in this case. Christian blames his father and uncle for that. "While the Type 1 motors suited the needs of Americans and their speed limit-restricted freeways, Germans have always tried to build engines that are capable of long distance, high speed Autobahn runs. We decided a big bore Type 1 engine wouldn't last that long, so turned our focus onto the VW big block, the Type 4 engine. Dad and Achim have lots of experience with these powerplants and pushed me in that direction. And there was another advantage for me: my father had a spare 2.4-litre long block on the shelf he was willing to donate," recalls the machine tool technician with a smile. Inside the used case is a machined dynamically balanced 71mm VW crank, combined with 103mm



Under-bonnet area is tidy. The genuine Fuchs spare wheel has been taken out for the photo



IDAs yes, Type 1 no. Under the lid lurks a monster 2366cc Type 4 engine. Not your usual Cal Look motor, but plenty powerful



LA6D is the colour code of the rarely seen Selvas Green, found on Mexican Beetles built from '82-'85

forged Mahle pistons. The ported and polished heads feature 47mm intake and 39mm exhaust valves. Compression ratio is set to 10.3:1, and the valves are controlled by a 324° cam, stock rockers and dual heavy duty springs. A black Porsche 911 11-blade fan in a glass fibre fan shroud, flanked by twin 48IDA Webers on match-ported manifolds dominate the engine bay. "I had no problem putting a Type 4 engine in a Cal Look Beetle, but I definitely wanted a turbo muffler. That wasn't easy as it was difficult to buy a Type 4 header with the right flange, so in the end I had to order one from A1 Muffler in California, then built the rest myself using a CSP muffler and tubes. At least that way I could make sure it fits my car perfectly."

Family ties: Christian has his dad, Rainer (right), and his uncle, Achim (left), to thank for his VW knowledge

Feels like home

Now the car had a rust-free body, souped-up suspension and a powerful engine. So what was left? The interior of course. "As it was a one-owner car, I left the door and side panels, plus the rear bench in place as they had no signs of wear at all." The front seats were replaced with some sportier Cobra ones, covered in black vinyl and mounted on self-made runners. The headrests and three-point belts offer some additional safety, while the Moto Lita steering wheel is just plain good looking. While there is no radio (the original blanking plate is actually part of the padding on a Mexican Beetle), Christian added extra VDO instruments for oil pressure and temperature next to the speedo, and an Auto Meter rev counter and a shift light hanging under the dashboard.

> "Cruising to the ice cream parlour and scaring the sh*t out of some Hondas"

"It took me almost 10 years to complete the car, due to my apprenticeship and job. But since then I've had a blast with it. The trips I've made together with my dad and uncle have been awesome, when we drive with three strong VWs, scaring boy racers!

"We went to the last DAS Drag Day in Bitburg, but so far I haven't felt confident racing my car over the quarter mile. I will definitely do it one day, just to see how quick it is, but maybe it would be better with a real heavy duty gearbox first."

Whether it's driving fast on the Autobahn or just cruising along, it's clear Christian enjoys it to the fullest. "There's nothing better than cruising to the ice cream parlour and scaring the shit out of some Hondas afterwards," he says with a grin. You've got our great understanding, Christian! ■

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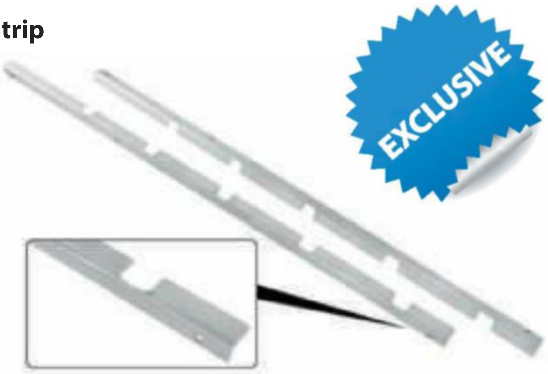

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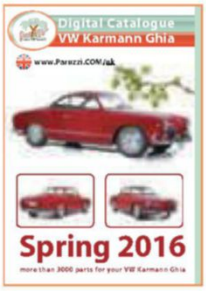
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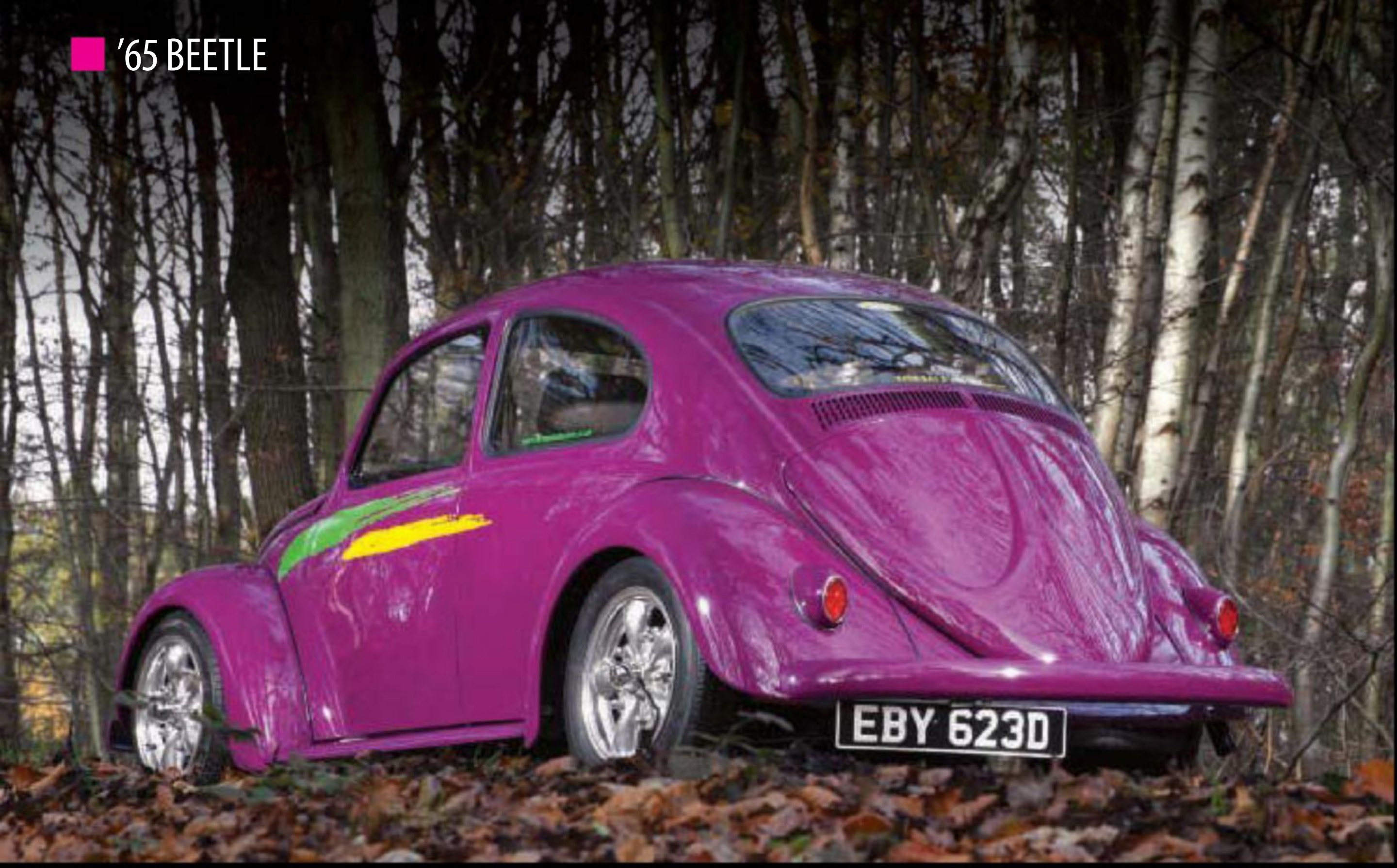
The past revisited

This 1965 custom Bug was part of the New Wave VW craze that hit the UK over 25 years ago. It has been brought back from the dead after over 1,000 hours of dedicated work and is better now than then

Words Ivan McCutcheon **Photos** Tom Gidden



On the original car, the wheels were body colour with green and yellow graphics

Writing about this car is a real trip down memory lane for me as the story starts before I was even involved with *VolksWorld*. I joined the mag in 1991 but, prior to this, I, like many others, had been totally focused on the New Wave VW explosion. The VW scene had been turned on its head in 1987 when Bug Jam first arrived and, by 1990, some of the VWs you'd see at the shows blew your mind to pieces. They may not be *en vogue* now, but they were the height of fashion at the time.

The weird thing is, the car you are about to read about was never featured in *VolksWorld*. From memory, the only 'ink' this car ever got was a couple of photos in show reports. Therefore, this feature has been a very long time coming, and it's only possible thanks to Pete Williams from Aldershot, Hampshire. Pete is better known as Pete Nice, and he's been into VWs for a long time and, in that time, has moved on from being a VW owner to running his own VW workshop in Chiddingfold, Surrey (www.aircooledtechnic.co.uk).

> “The only ink this car ever got was a couple of pictures in show reports”

When he saw Warren G's old Bug advertised on Volkszone, his mind went into overdrive and he made the decision he was having it. Don't you go thinking the car looked anything like it does here though, as it was a right old mess. I wouldn't have touched it with a barge pole. Thankfully for the car, Pete and I have different views. I've got to give him respect for saving this car and bringing it back from the dead. He has made it better in many ways than it was, whilst adding numerous elements to it that make it a combination of the car Warren came out with and his own interpretation of it. Therefore, it is no longer the car it was in many ways. I'm not sure if something can be classed as an homage of itself, but that's how I look at this car.

TECH INFO

BODY: 1965 South African Beetle; hidden hinges; side-opening bonnet and decklid; Oval Window decklid and rear lights; modified bumpers

ENGINE: 1584cc Type 1 twin port; Bosch 009 distributor; twin Weber 34ICT carbs; hide-away muffler

INTERIOR: Vauxhall Recaro front seats; custom centre console housing speedo and stereo head unit; smoothed dashboard; Thump! Thump! steering wheel

SUSPENSION: 2-inch narrowed beam; dropped spindles

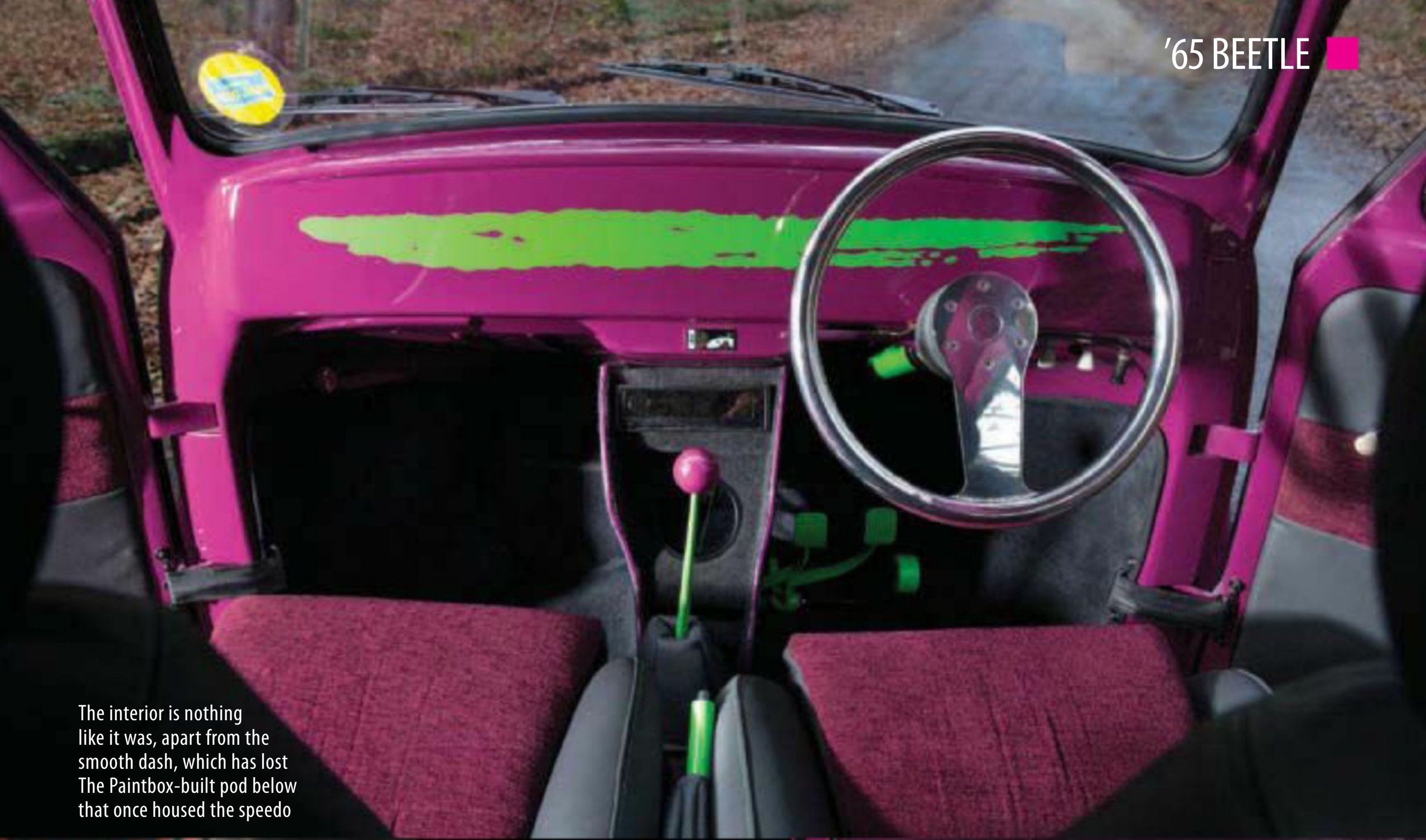
WHEELS AND TYRES: American Eagle 5-spokes; 135/70 x 15 front tyres; 165 x 15 rears

But we're moving ahead of ourselves here, as I still need to inform those who weren't into VWs, or in many cases even born when this car turned up at its first show, Bug Jam 1990. Back then, the way we built cars was very different to today. The majority didn't give a monkey's about detailing the suspension or painting the inner wings. Well, actually that's not strictly true, we did paint under the wings… in black Schutz underseal. We didn't have the time, the money or the compulsion to go further than that – our view was cover it in Schutz and slam it so no one can see. If it made it through an MoT, game on! The reason we didn't have the money was that we were nippers and what money we had needed to go on body mods, mad paint, a set of rims, seats out of something that wasn't a Beetle and a set of one-piece windows for no reason other than they looked cool (they certainly weren't cool to fit, or once they were fitted!). Oh, and any spare dollars went on going doolally at VW shows.

Nostalgia nonsense

The reason this needs to be made crystal clear is that the VW nostalgia stuff you read with starry eyes today is nonsense. The vast majority of cars were polished turds built to make people go wow now. We didn't care what they'd look like in 25 years as, by the next Bug Jam, we wanted to drop something even cooler. The most important thing was that the colour choice and mods hadn't been done before, or at least not together on the same ride. That's what got props in 1990.

I can't tell you how cars from the late '80s and the start of the '90s have ended



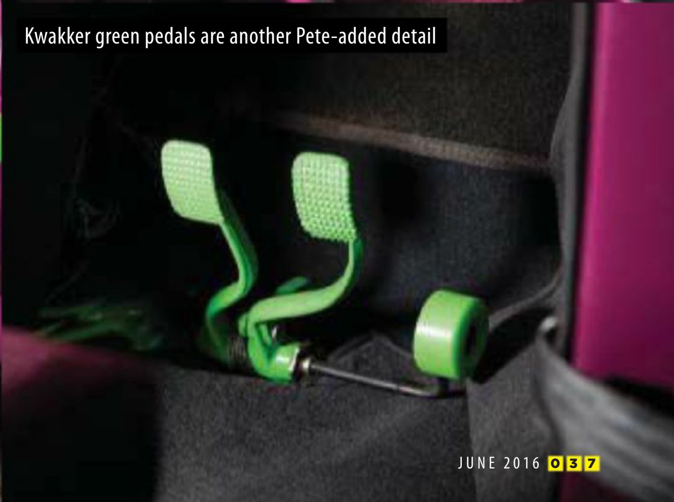
The interior is nothing like it was, apart from the smooth dash, which has lost The Paintbox-built pod below that once housed the speedo

Pete decided to do the speedo in blue and green

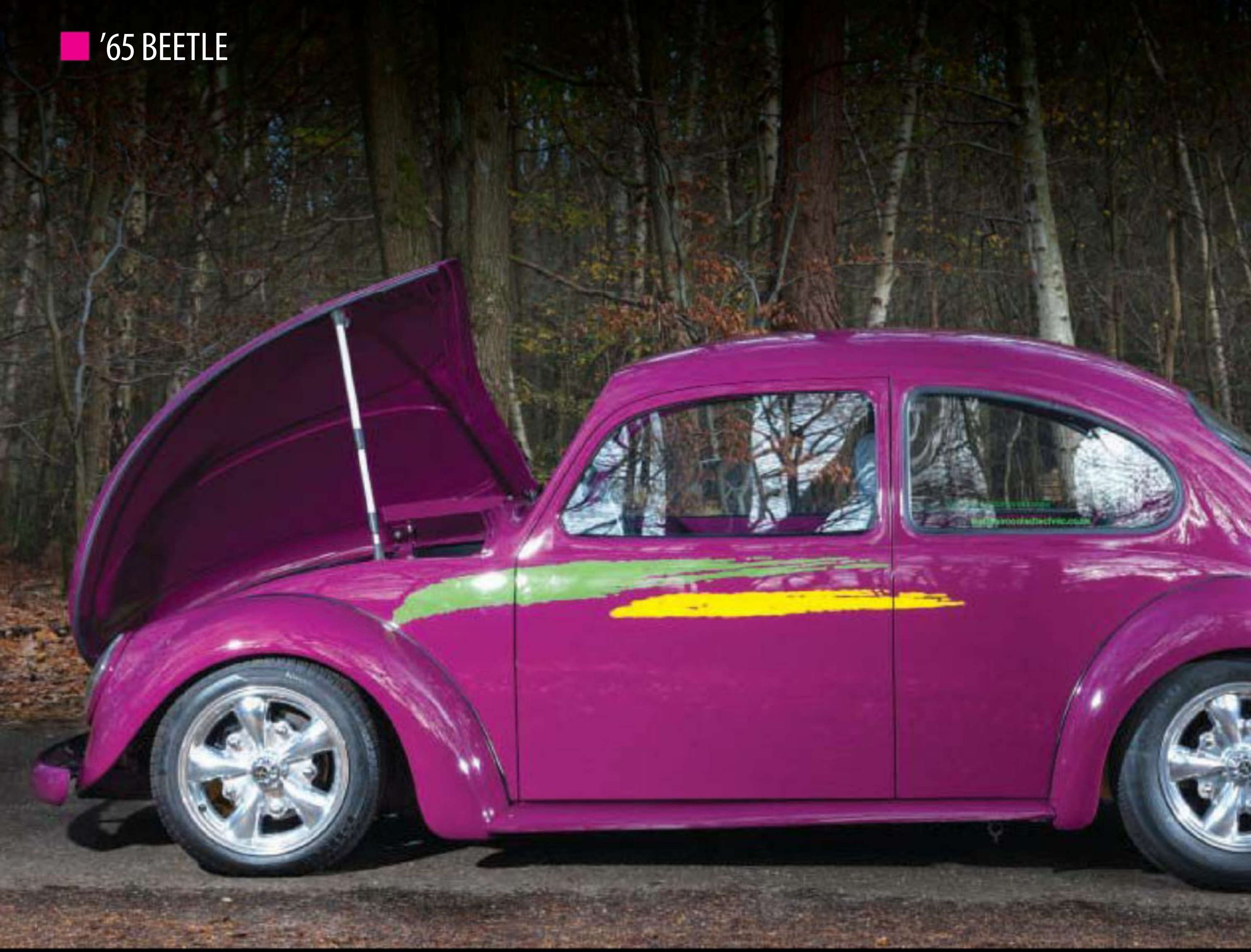
> “Any spare dollars went on going doolally at VW shows”

Using non-VW seats was the hot ticket in 1990. Leather Recaros (here ex-Vauxhall) were the hottest ticket of all

Under the bonnet it was never this nice



Kwakker green pedals are another Pete-added detail



up with fancy schmancy monikers today. In 1990, this was just Warren's Bug, not 'Plum Skussy' as it seems to have become known. Maybe it's the Back To '89 lots thing? What I can tell you is that Warren's Bug dropped heavy at that Bug Jam [Straight outta Compton (Surrey) eh, Ivan?-Ed]. It was at a stage where it was driveable and, obviously, he had to get it there. Warren was part of a crew of young north Surrey lads who were all into it big time. They included Steve Murphy and Ian Clark, who went on to run Wolfsburg Performance Services.

Out of (South) Africa

Warren bought the South African-built '65 as a stocker and had already had some body tricks carried out by the time he arrived with it at another youngsters VW paint and body shop called The Paintbox. Simon Emery remembers it well: "Warren had already had the hidden door hinge conversion done to the car, I think this was done by Shane Powell. The car was white with grey primer patches where the work had been done. Warren chose the body colour and I came up with the idea for the green and yellow graphics. Back then they were painted on, I think they're vinyl stickers now. We smoothed the dashboard out and made a pod under the dash to house the speedo. The side-hinged bonnet and decklid were also by us. I think there might have been bits of Skoda involved. We also had to repair damage the car had picked up on one of the rear quarters. The other thing we did was fit the snowflake rear lights but, to be different, we mounted them lower down the wings than VW did."

Warren took his Bug to a few shows but, like a mayfly, it appeared from nowhere and then vanished just as quickly. We do know it was involved in a shunt and the rear end was damaged, but that's about it. In those days, the words Beetle and value weren't used by insurance companies in relation to each other, so the car ended up with Sodi Michael, who ran a VW workshop in Bagshot, Surrey called Small Car Specialties. It was sold on with no rear wings and a mangled decklid. To put it back on the road, the new owner fitted a pair of wings, lights and a glass fibre decklid. Then, after being smoked around for a while, it was swapped for a Porsche 924 and disappeared again.

In 2004, the car changed hands again, the new owner intent on restoring it back to its old show car spec started to carry out the necessary work, replacing the floorpans, heater channels, rear quarters, body mounts and so on. It was then advertised for sale for £1,200, with some of the original parts such as the bumpers with modified brackets, running boards and stainless firewall. The deal also included a solid w-decklid, a pair of tail lights and a full set of Day Mouldings 'glass wings.

"Like a mayfly, it appeared from nowhere and then vanished"

Sucked in

Needless to say, it was Pete that bought it at this point and, after he picked up the remains, he planned to put the car back to how it was in quick time. However, he ended up getting a lot more involved. Well, as I said earlier, people do cars differently these days. Pete explains: "I had to replace both doors and re-do some repairs that were

^ In 1990, the side-opening bonnet and decklid blew people away

No one needed a Pope's nose in 1990, well, apart from the Pope!

Polished American Eagle fives are Pete's choice, not Warren's

Note the headlights haven't got mounting screws or adjusters, at least not visible ones

solid, but not show worthy. I had the body and 'pan shotblasted and primed. The 'pan was then sprayed with satin chassis black. Both sides of the boot floor were replaced, along with both crossmembers and one of the large rear body mount panels." The deeper he got into it, though, the deeper he got into it. "It just grew into a monster," he laughs. By which he is referring to the fact he had all the suspension components powder coated bright yellow, including the 2-inch narrowed beam he chose to fit. He also added dropped spindles, an EMPI wide-five front disc brake conversion and renewed the rear brakes. "Basically, I wanted to do the car justice," he told us.

After the seemingly endless bodywork restoration was completed, the 'shell and panels were prepped for new paint. The colour is the same as Warren chose in 1990, Triumph Magenta. You'll note the car has modified headlights with hidden adjusters and mounts. Pete also added LED indicators inside the headlights, along with thin tinted Perspex inserts behind the outer lenses. To try and make sure the car never had another rear-ender, LED indicators have been fitted inside the rear window. They are removed when the car is shown.

Green for go

The engine is a stock 1600, and looks as good as anything you'd have seen in 1990. It's got a 30 horse-style fan housing, twin Weber 34ICTs and the tinware is all powder coated in Kawasaki green.

The area Pete has made his mark on most is the interior. He went nuts detailing the pedals, gear stick and handbrake in lurid green, then had a pair of Vauxhall Recaros and the door and side panels re-trimmed in cloth and grey Brooklands leather with green stitching. He also added the Thump! Thump! steering wheel and console. In the end, it took 1,000 hours and £20,000 to complete the car. That's another thing that has changed since 1990! ■

Thump! Thump! stainless steel steering wheel. Cold

ANNUAL U.K.
BUG JAM

Blimey, that's a blast from the past

^ The rear view mirror has been painted to match the bodywork

< Pete went for Kawasaki green tinware and a black block on the 1600 twin-port motor

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BIG BORE RED ENGINE *DIY PRICE: £1049*

These are high-performance alternatives, built to 1641cc. Assembled with the same new components as the 'Silver' engine, but fitted with big bore barrels and pistons, brand new cylinder heads **and** a new 009 distributor. Built to run on unleaded fuel. Exchangeable for 1300 or 1600cc.

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DIY PRICE: £1,499

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Same specification as the 'Big Bore', but fitted with a fast road camshaft.

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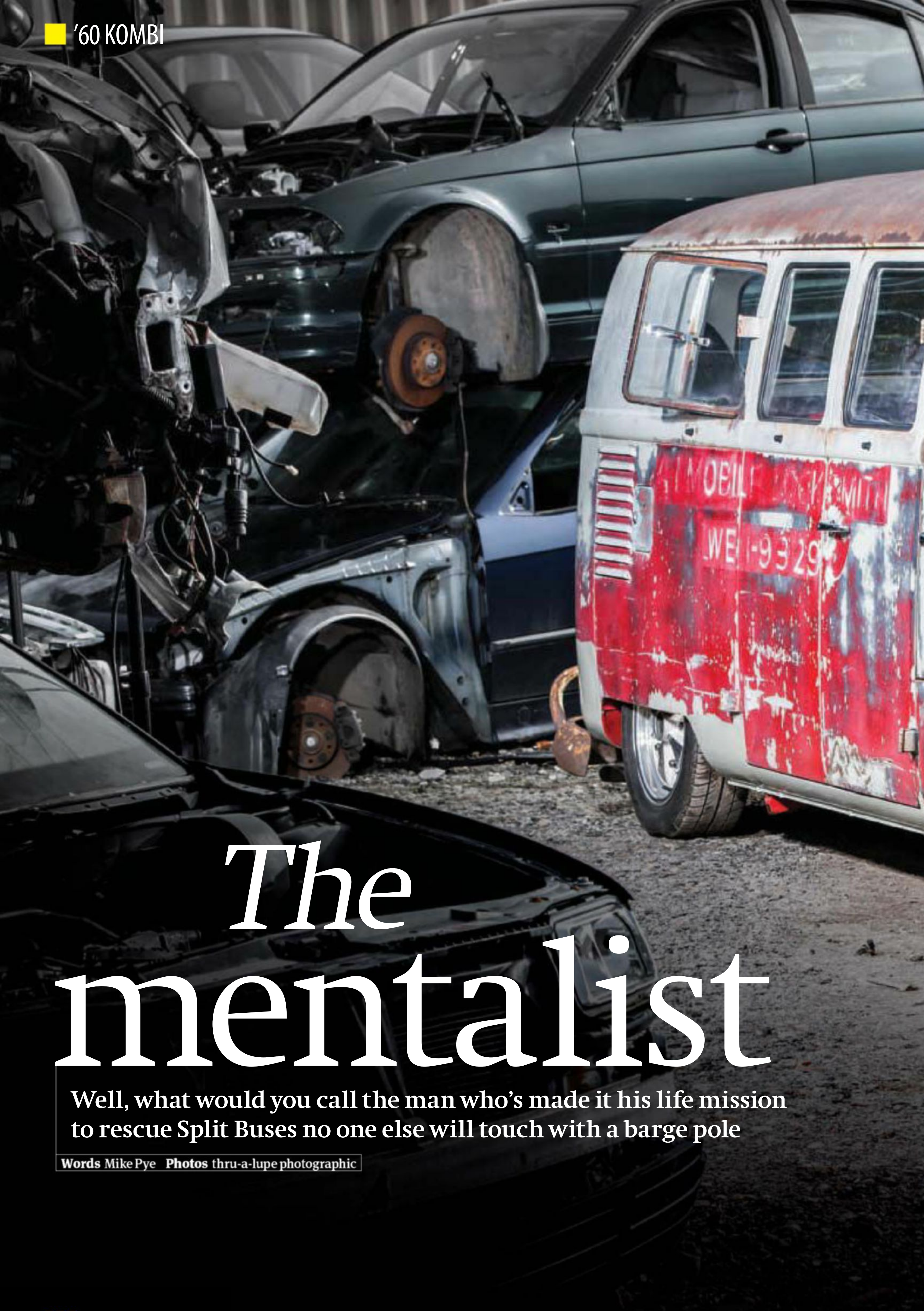
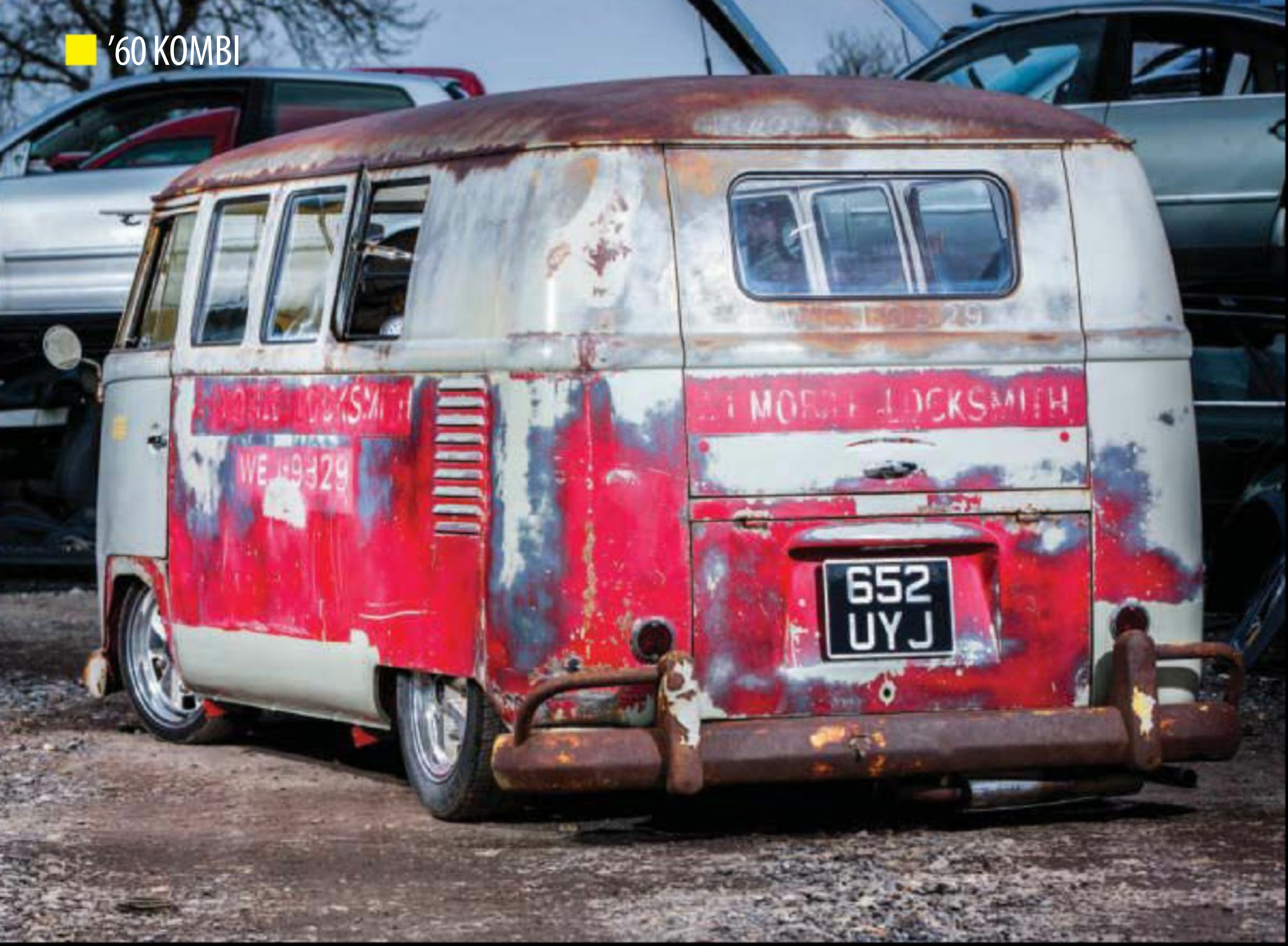


The mentalist

Well, what would you call the man who's made it his life mission to rescue Split Buses no one else will touch with a barge pole

Words Mike Pye **Photos** thru-a-lupe photographic

652 UYJ



It's ironic that the first Bus 'Barndoor Ben' has had featured in *VolksWorld* isn't a Barndoor at all. "I like the early stuff but that doesn't mean a 60's Split or nice slammed Bay doesn't float my boat, too," he says

When someone tells you they have a friend – in this case, well known and much loved shaggy VW head, Alan Scott aka Scotty – who maintains a list of their former, current and future VW projects, you know that person has gone way beyond the realms of a 'normal' VW enthusiast. But then anyone who books a ferry ticket to Sweden with a Van and trailer with the idea of collecting not one, but two rusting hulks of Split Screen land fill without ever having spoken to the owner of one of the vehicles has surely to be a little bit of filling short of a sandwich, no?

> "I enjoy the chase, that's what it's really all about for me"

"I bought my first Bay Window when I was 16," recalls Ben, "quickly followed by a couple of very rusty Beetles… and I've a '54 Deluxe and a '52 Panel currently in the workshop. I can't see it ever ending to be honest." But Ben is not just another VW collector, he's a dedicated VW hunter, and nothing turns his hunting instinct on more than a Barndoor Bus. "I passed my test at 17 and have been a driver and enthusiast of old Volkswagens since then, but in the last few years I've become more heavily involved in the scene – sourcing early vehicles, helping out at shows and keeping the event bars in business. Even if I found my perfect Bus – an upright spare wheel, early 1950 Kombi or Panel in OG paint – I'd soon start searching for something else 'cause I enjoy the chase, that's really what it's all about for me."

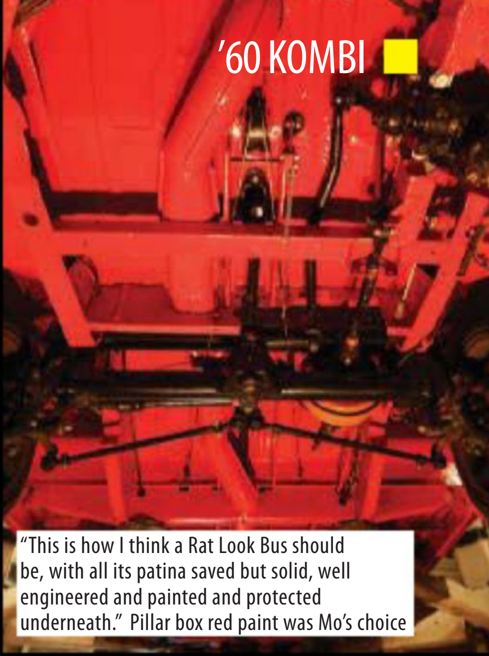
It's perhaps ironic then that the man who has in recent times become known in the Bus scene simply as 'Barndoor Ben' should have as his first *VolksWorld* feature a June 1960 Bus, but while Ben has developed a deep-rooted penchant for the earliest Buses of all, he's by no means blinkered in his outlook. "Just because I happen to really like the early stuff doesn't mean that a '60's Split or a nice slammed Bay doesn't float my boat, too. My wife, Mo, was well into the logos on this one, and I don't need much persuading to take on another project. She's not as sad as I am, but it was cool to have her so enthusiastic about it, and then to plan the build together. She's responsible for choosing the pillar box red paint underneath too, something a little different which I think turned out looking pretty cool."

Engineered to last

And there's the other thing that singles Ben out from the hordes of gnarly / rusty / ratty / patina (delete as applicable) Bus owners these days. A civil engineer by trade, he may drive around in Buses that look to the average man on the street like they should be condemned, but they're far from gnarly under the skin. "I'm all about original, but I'm all about safety too, especially on the lowered stuff. That's why all my Buses are always done underneath, and why this one also has a brand new wiring loom. Even when these things are done right, you've still got to keep on top of them as things you don't expect can still happen. That's why I always put my Buses through an MoT every year, whether they need one or not. They're definitely not plug 'n' play these cars."

And for that Ben has a handful of trusted friends that not only understand where he's coming from, but have the ability to turn that understanding into reality. It generally starts with the extremely talented Jeff Cutler at JC Welding Services in Leicestershire (www.jcweldingservices.co.uk). "We go to extraordinary lengths to use every single bit of original metal we can, even down to finding original bits of sheet metal to make repair pieces from," Ben continues. Or, in this case, tracking down a set of US-spec bumpers with just the right amount of patina to look

It's all been left pretty much as was up front in the cab, Ibeit with a bit of new material over the seats. That big boy tach was a present from Ben and Oli at Beetle Magic

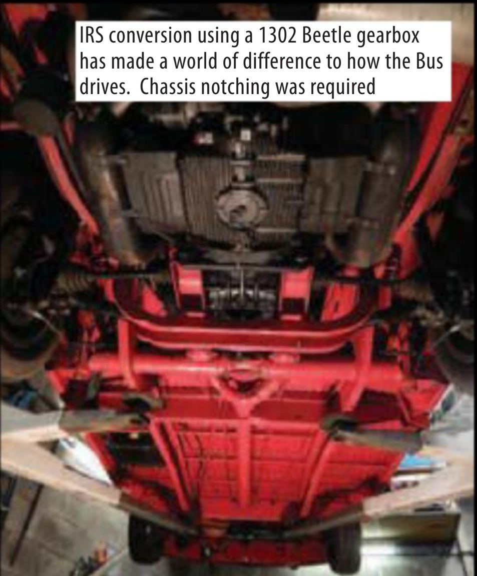


"This is how I think a Rat Look Bus should be, with all its patina saved but solid, well engineered and painted and protected underneath." Pillar box red paint was Mo's choice

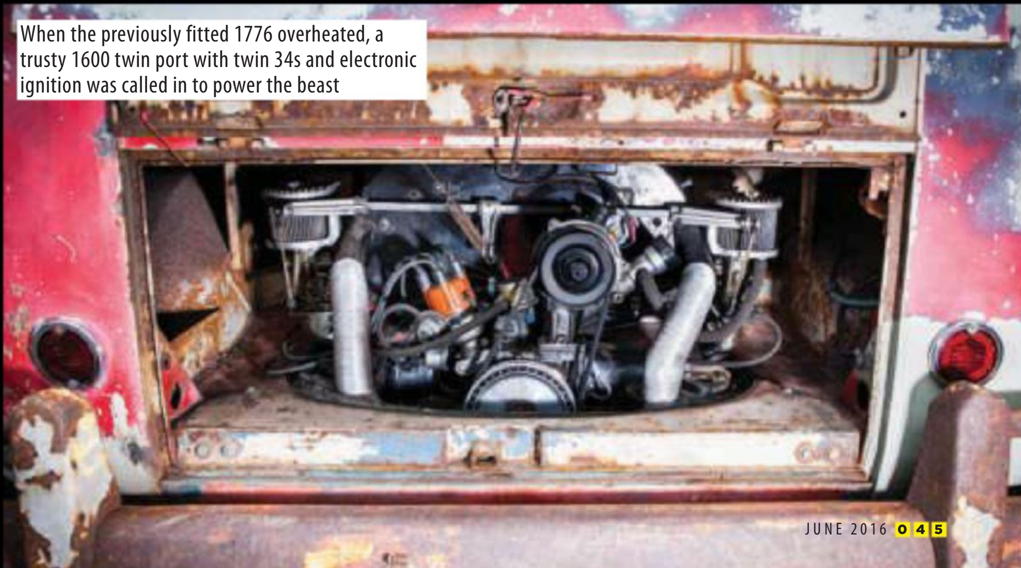
The interior is best described as Spartan, but it's enough to fit a few people in for an impromptu party

The logos are what attracted Ben and Mo to the Bus. Amusingly, for an ex-locksmith's Bus, it has a different key for every opener!

Wheels are American Eagle wide-5 'Fuchs'. Tyres are 165/50s and 185/65s, Ben's compromise between looks and ride quality



IRS conversion using a 1302 Beetle gearbox has made a world of difference to how the Bus drives. Chassis notching was required



When the previously fitted 1776 overheated, a trusty 1600 twin port with twin 34s and electronic ignition was called in to power the beast

652 UYJ

Here's Ben, the single most optimistic person in the entire VW world. Beside him, Mo, the single most understanding wife in the VW world

The previous owner in America was going to repaint this Bus. Discuss…

like they've been on this Bus from day one.

When this Bus landed from Kansas, USA, it was shipped straight to Jeff for a quick tidy up to get it on the road. I-beams, outriggers, jacking points, sills, battery tray, offside rear corner, cab floor… All the usual suspects needed repair or replacement. And this on what in Ben's world was "a pretty solid Bus, at least compared to what I usually start with!" This explains the errant patches of grey primer low down on the Bus' body. "I used to have painted cars, but of late I've become a lot more interested in the history of these vehicles, which is part of what attracted me to this one. And other people seem to like that side of it, too. I've had random people on the street come up to me and ask about it, ask where it's come from, what the story is with the logos and the locksmith business. The guy I bought this one from was going to re-paint it, but as far as I'm concerned that would be like painting over the Mona Lisa.

"What I'm definitely not into, though, is faking patina, or clones – you know, Buses built up from all new panels that just have a VIN plate from an original Bus – you've got to be honest about what these things are. I'm not trying to fool anybody. I'll put all the information out there for anyone to see." To protect that all-important history, Ben has T-Cut and waxed what's left of the original paint, taking great care not to remove any more of the logos than the weather has already put paid to. Where there isn't any, he mixed linseed oil with beeswax and then machine polished it. It all helps keep the oxidation process from marching on but, should Ben ever sell it, heaven help anyone that tries to paint this Bus in the future!

"Initially, the plan was just to perform a standard lowering job"

TECH INFO

BODY: 1960 mobile locksmith Kombi, original light grey top half, old red repainted lower
ENGINE: 1600 twin port; twin 34ICT Webers; electronic ignition
GEARBOX: 1302 Beetle IRS
SUSPENSION: Creative Engineering 84mm narrowed beam raised into the chassis; dropped spindles; chassis notches front and rear; raised steering box; shortened column;
WHEELS AND TYRES: American Eagle 5-spokes; 165/50 and 185/65s

The Bus also had some minor accident damage to the driver's a-post and the front 'arches had been cut out by a previous owner as a preamble to a lowering job that never happened. That latter point, more than anything else, sealed the fate of this Bus as an extreme low rider. Which is where father and son team, 'Oli' and Ben from Beetle Magic in Dorset came into the picture. "They're good friends of mine, and just brilliant at what they do," enthuses Ben. "Better still, they actually seem to get excited by the work I take them. Initially, the plan was just to perform a standard lowering job on this Bus, but as Mo was so into it, and I really wanted to drive it, we started looking at ways to do it better. It was Oli that pushed me down the IRS route. I really wasn't sure at first. I'm used to straight axle-ing stuff, but he was insistent that I try it, and it's worked out really well."

Likewise, in order to preserve the driveability, as well as being treated to an 84mm (3.3-inch) narrowed Weedeater beam from Creative Engineering and some dropped spindles from Paul Wisk Restos, the front end has been given a two-inch axle raise, which means stock dampers can still do the job they were designed for. "I know everyone says it, but this Bus really is a pleasure to drive. It was a lot of fun puzzling out how to get everything to fit and work together properly, and the chassis had to be quite heavily modified with notches and strengthening so there's adequate clearance for the axle tubes, track

MOBILE LOCKSMITH
652 UYJ

rods and steering arms. Plus the steering box has been lifted and the column shortened, but it was worth all the work as it drives like a dream. I had a few problems with the 1776cc motor that was in it before overheating, but since I've gone back to a 1600 twin port with dual carbs it's been no trouble at all. In fact, with the CSP discs and Bay servo that's also on it, I'd say it's more comparable to driving my old '71 Westy than an early Split."

If you've got stance, patina and signwriting you've got it made. Just be prepared for the inevitable when are you going to restore / paint it? questions from passers-by

A rum job

When it came to the interior, Ben and Mo have modest needs. Somewhere to sit with friends and drink rum would probably best sum up their requirements. "I'm a simple chap. It's nothing fancy, just a homemade rock 'n' roll bed, the original rubber floor mats and some homemade side panels but it's all I need.

"My mates all take the piss out of me and say I never keep anything, but in reality I'd like to keep everything, I just can't. I'm fortunate to have got to a point where I have amassed a few things, but this is the one I'll jump in and take out for a drive if I'd had a bad day at work, or the one we'll pile all our stuff in and head off to a show at the weekend, and it never fails to put a smile on my face. I'll probably still sell it some day, and it might be sooner rather than later as the '54 Deluxe is really soaking up some money, but for now it's achieved everything I wanted, and I just love driving it.

Clearly, this kind of Bus is the hot ticket in the British VW scene right now, but how do the other people in your life react to your affliction. "I don't think everyone gets what I do. In Europe they don't get the patina thing, I'm sure my neighbours think I'm a fool – or at best an interesting character – and even my dad used to think I was an idiot, but he seems to quite enjoy what I do now, and even helps with some jobs on the Buses, which is great.

"I'm under no illusions that one day this Bus will need to be restored, but hopefully I've given it another few years of life, and made it sound and safe in the interim." And that, in a nutshell, is Ben's ethos. But believe us when I say this is just the tip of a very big iceberg and, like all good icebergs, there's a lot more going on under the surface than what you see on top… ■

ANYTHING CAN BE RESTORED…

And this was the good one, plucked from a scrapyard in Kansas, USA as an almost complete Bus

For Ben, though, nothing is too daunting to take on. This '54 Deluxe is one of his two ongoing projects. It came in the post, flat packed from various parts of America

Add in a few funky greens and a heap of the talents of Jeff Cutler at JC Welding Services in Leicestershire and the jigsaw starts to take shape

And here's the Bus as it is now. Okay, so it's still a far cry from a finished Bus, but it's a whole lot closer than it was. And the work is a credit to the vision of Ben and the talent of Jeff

This has to rate as the craziest restoration effort yet though. Built in January '52, it's the oldest RHD Barndoor known to exist in the world. The Swedish VW guys were well aware of it, but no one thought it was restorable

Even optimistic Ben was having second thoughts when it was pushed the right way up. However, "they hadn't realised the calibre of idiot they were dealing with," he says with a grin

And so it was cut up, loaded on a trailer, dragged home and turned over to that man Jeff again. "I haven't broken him yet, but I think I've come close," laughs Ben

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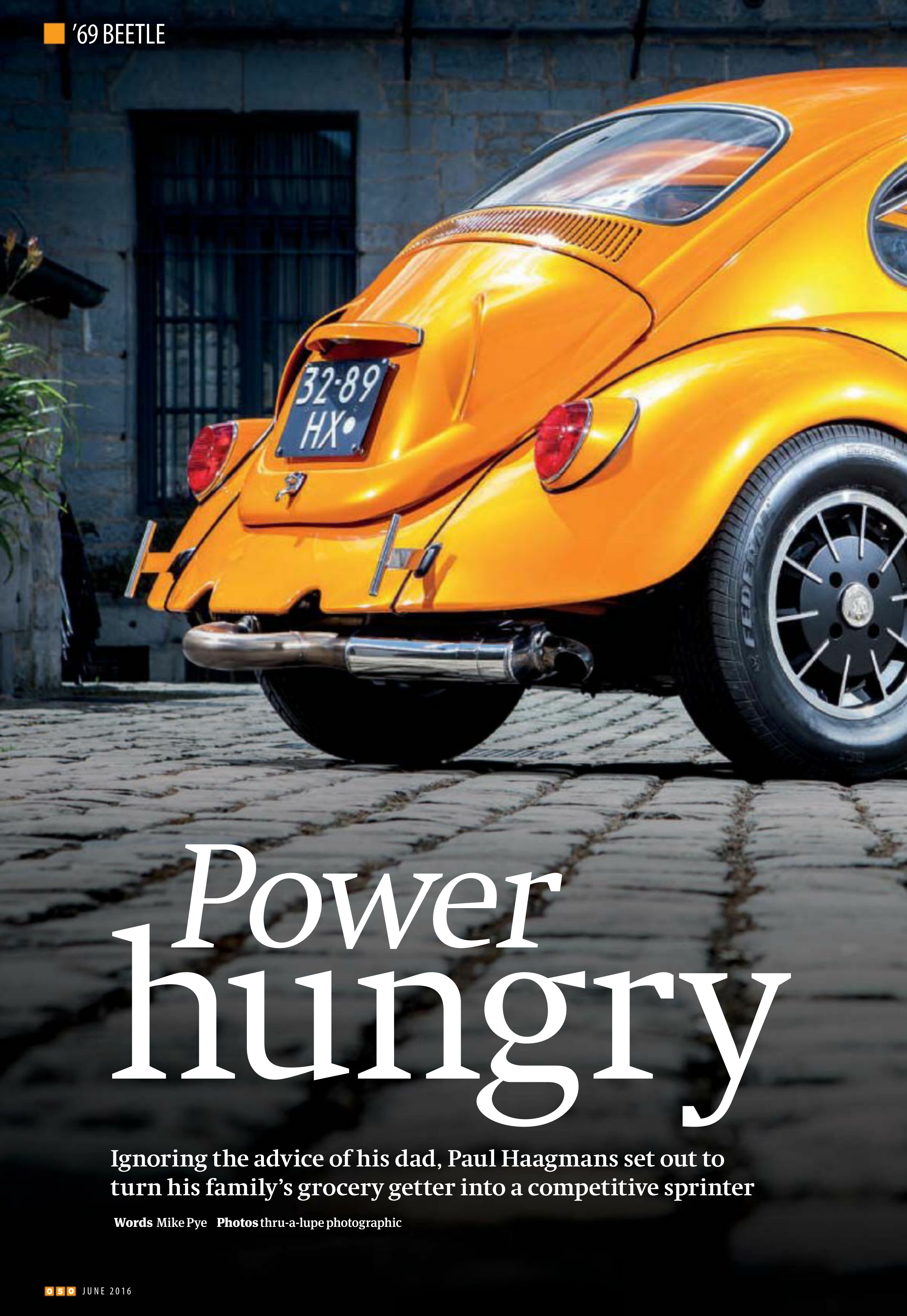
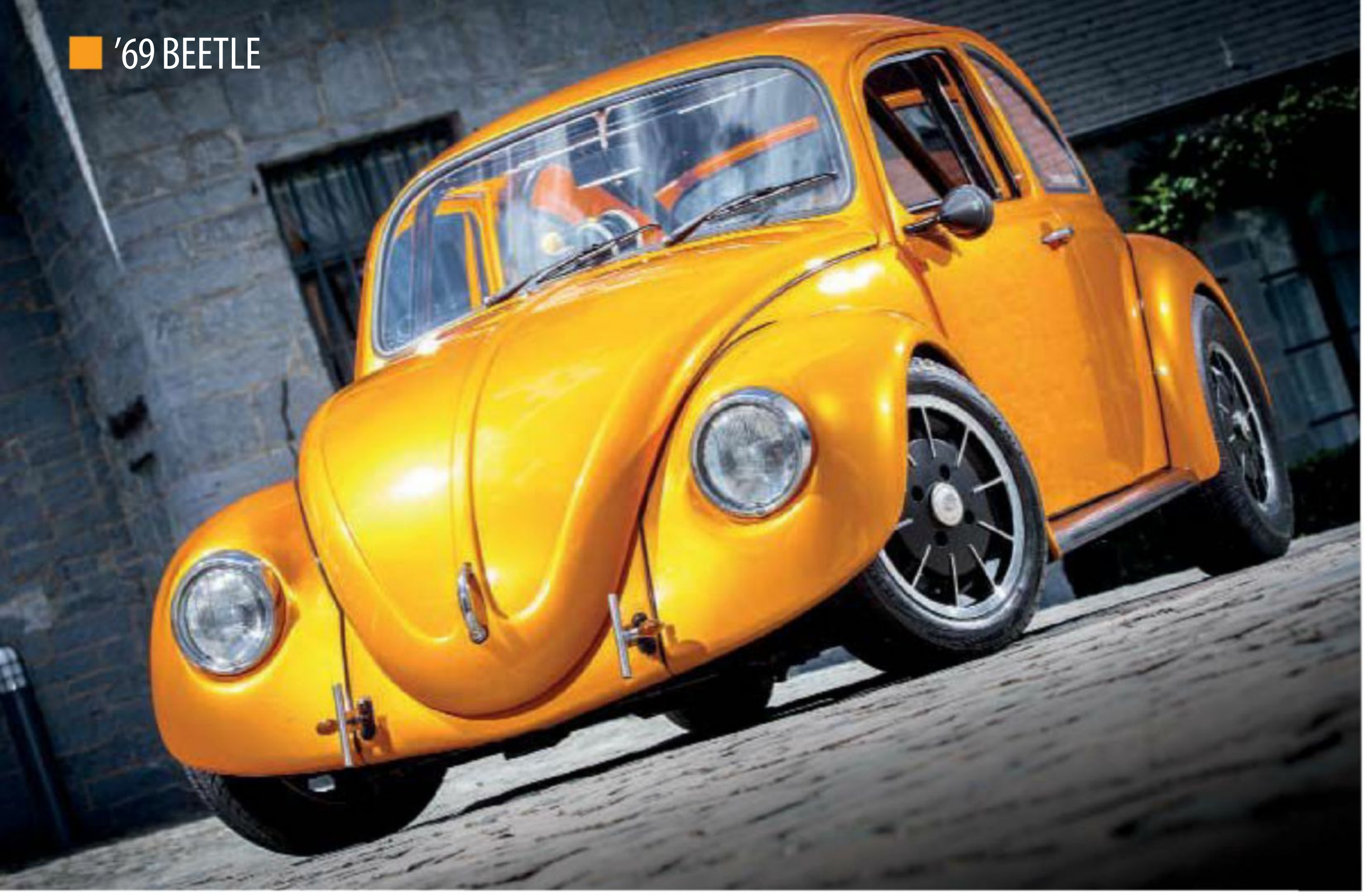


Power hungry

Ignoring the advice of his dad, Paul Haagmans set out to turn his family's grocery getter into a competitive sprinter

Words Mike Pye **Photos** thru-a-lupe photographic



Retro fitting an earlier bonnet to a late car may be frowned upon in some circles these days but there's no doubt it better visually balances the front end of a Beetle, especially when no bumpers are used

Just about everybody we speak to with regard to their Volkswagens can trace their interest in them back to a particular event, or a time in their lives. Often it’s a friend who had one, or who introduced them to an event like Bug Jam, but for 28-year-old Dutchman, Paul Haagmans, it was just a foregone conclusion that VWs would play a significant part in his life. You see, like many of us, Paul’s parents had a Beetle. Not just any Beetle, but the very Beetle you see here. And the ’69 1300 was an integral part of Paul’s childhood. “I remember being taken to school in the car, and to my first VW shows in it. My dad wasn’t into making it go faster, or anything like that, it was just his car, and he looked after it really well,” recalls Paul. Like a lot of youngsters, Paul made numerous comments about how one day the car would be his and so was beside himself with excitement when, in 2005, that day finally came. “The only thing my dad said to me about it was ‘keep the car original, please’. But then I started going to shows in it, and I found myself drawn to the racing, more than the stock, concours cars. At IKW [International Kever Weekend] in Budel they had a sprint track, and at Spa the drag racing is a big part of the event. I couldn’t believe how quick some of the Volkswagens were going. It was then I knew what the future was for dad’s old car.”

> “I remember being taken to school in the car, and to my first VW shows”

As anyone who has been to Le Bug Show in Spa Francorchamps will know, it attracts a huge number of cars from Germany, and the really quick ones tend to be late models with big Type 4 power. They’re exhilarating to hear and to watch on track, but such performance doesn’t come cheap. Far from it. A more traditional California Looker, on the other hand, can be progressively built up to, and the overall look can be achieved for relatively modest outlay. This wasn’t lost on Paul, who envisaged his car with a dropped nose, fat rubber on the back and, ultimately, a honking IDA motor. It wasn’t going to happen overnight, obviously, but it was going to happen, he was sure of that. “After driving the car as it was for one season, the crankshaft seal started to leak very badly and I had to replace it,” he recalls. “That was the beginning of my obsession with engines. I took the engine out, but my curiosity made me completely disassemble it, rather than just fix the leak.”

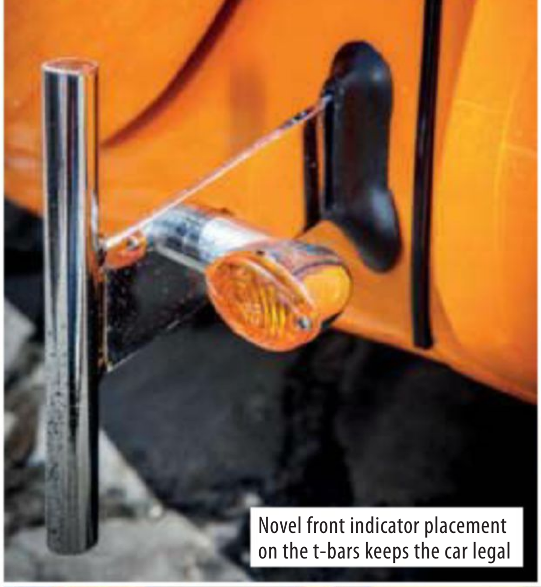
Scary Harry

Faced with a pile of parts on the bench and a car that no longer ran, Paul had to make a decision. “I was living at home with my parents at the time and money wasn’t a problem, so rather than try and rebuild the engine myself, I bought a rebuilt 1641cc engine. That started everything really. Not long after I fitted the engine, I heard about Scary Harry Tuning in Someren, so I called them and asked if they could help me get the best out of the engine. In the end, they got 91bhp out of it on the dyno, which I was pretty happy with, for a while…”

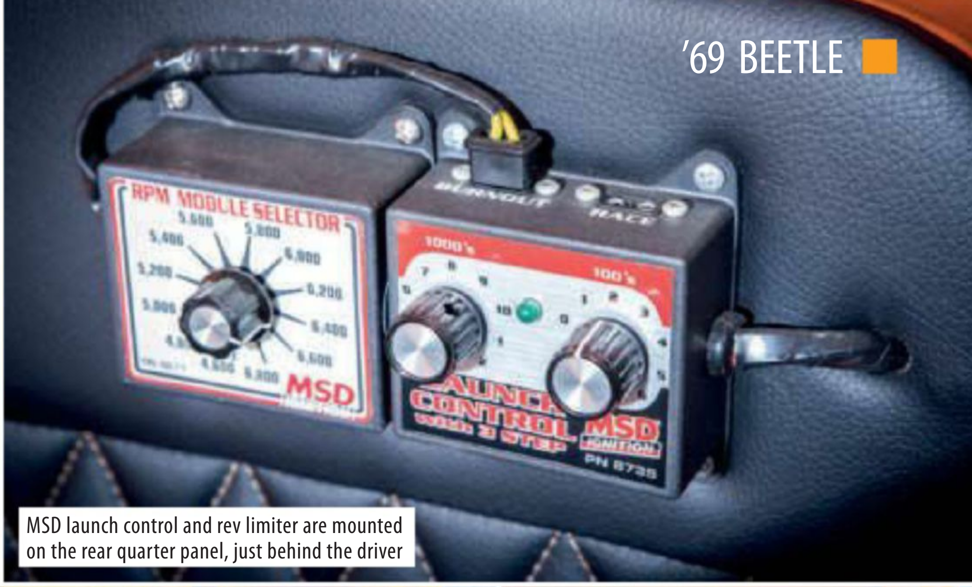
With the Cal Look blueprint now firmly embedded in his head, the car itself now had to live up to the motor, so a pair of adjusters were welded into the front beam and a set of original 4-lug Sprint Stars sourced, restored and bolted up, with some meaty 205/70 tyres at the back door.

“Of course, the original bumpers had to be removed, too, and I started looking for some of the parts that would turn the car into my perfect image of a Cal Looker – things like the Talbot Berlin mirror, t-bars and 48IDA Webers. All the time I was driving the car and going to the VW shows the 1641 was very reliable and made the car a lot more fun to drive but, of course, all the time I also wanted to go faster.”

Four years later, in 2009, the time came to implement the next stage of the car’s transformation into a full bore California Looker. “I stripped the car down to every nut and bolt to rebuild it from the ground up.



Novel front indicator placement on the t-bars keeps the car legal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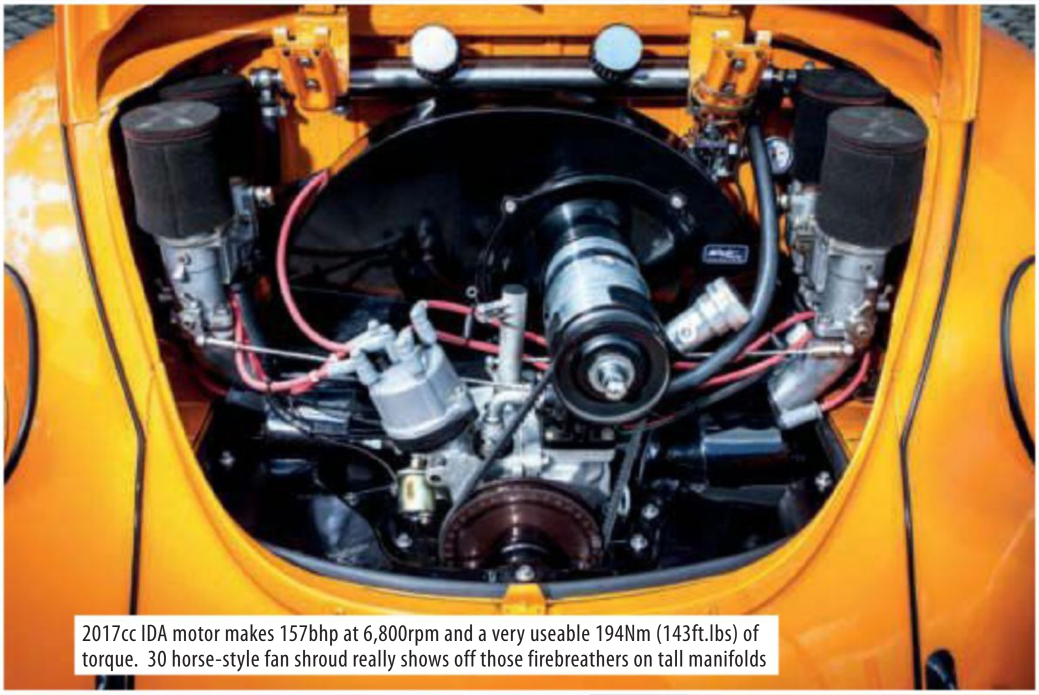
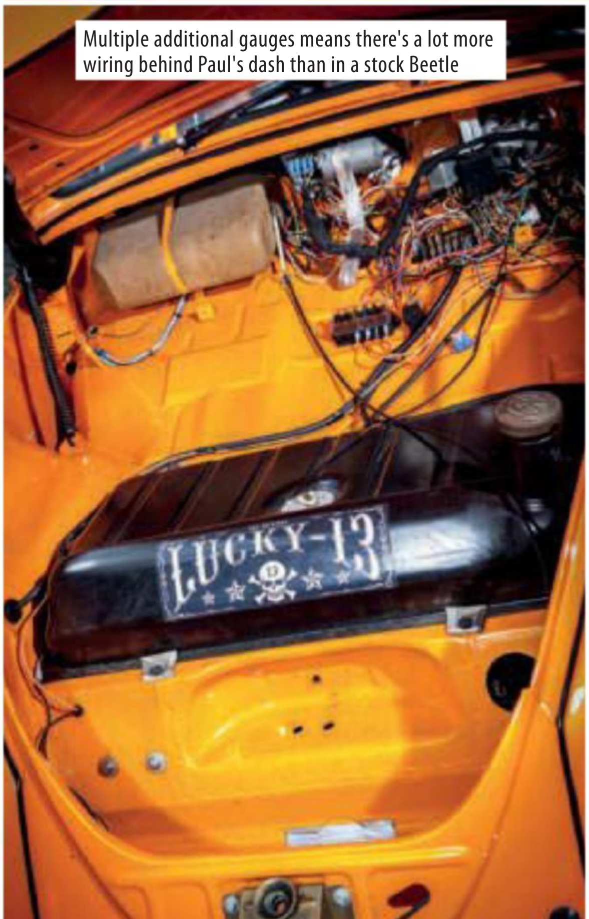
MSD launch control and rev limiter are mounted on the rear quarter panel, just behind the driver



2017cc IDA motor makes 157bhp at 6,800rpm and a very useable 194Nm (143ft.lbs) of torque. 30 horse-style fan shroud really shows off those firebreathers on tall manifolds

Individual Pipercross filters help prevent the 48 Webers living up to their name



Multiple additional gauges means there's a lot more wiring behind Paul's dash than in a stock Beetle

BURN
LAUNCH
WOLFSBURG

VW motorsport steering wheel with burnout and launch control buttons looks the part

MSD 8485 dizzy, Blaster coil and 6-AL ignition box fires the beast

If you want to see behind you a genuine Talbot Berlin mirror is useless, but it sure looks cool!

The body wasn't too bad, but I had it sandblasted to make sure there was no rust hiding in any places. I always liked the look of US-spec '67s, with their upright headlights but long bonnet, so I kept the stock headlights but decided to fit an earlier bonnet and front valance, and remove the indicators from the tops of the wings. At the back, I changed the big tombstone tail lights for some smaller 1200 ones and fitted a glass fibre decklid with eyebrows to let more air in. Then I just had to decide on a colour."

Now, in recent years it has become almost law that Cal Lookers are painted in stock VW colours, but in their heyday in the mid-'70s colour choice was a lot less constricted. Contemporary Porsche tones were popular, but people weren't afraid to look even further afield. Key was for the bodywork underneath to be clean and straight so the chosen colour was shown off to best effect. De-chroming helped, as did one-piece windows and trim-less window rubbers – the less is more approach being a definite part of the original Cal Look ethos, at least it was until Old School Cal Look deemed trim, quarter lights and a stock dash the way to go.

> "In the mid-'70s, colour choice was a lot less constricted"

TECH INFO

BODY: 1969 1300 Deluxe Beetle; pre-'68 bonnet; 'glass vented decklid; repainted in Ford Focus ST Electric Orange

ENGINE: 2017cc Type 1; 87.4mm CB crank; CB H-beam rods, Web Cam 86C; CB Super Mag 044 heads; dual 48IDAs; 10.5:1 compression

GEARBOX: VW Type 1 with Super Diff, h/d side plate, welded gears, steel shift forks; alloy trapeze bar and Berg intermediate mount

SUSPENSION: Homemade 2½-inch narrowed beam with adjusters; Koni reds all round

WHEELS AND TYRES: 5.5 x 15 Gas Burner replicas; 165/65s and 205/70s

Electric Orange

"For me though, the colour of the car had to be very flashy and bright, so I chose Electric Orange from the Ford Focus ST," continues Paul. Go online and you'll find arguments aplenty about this paint – Is it pearl or metallic? Is it a two stage or three-stage pearl? Can a car painted in it ever be touched up? The answer to the first question is both (depending on what year car it was on), and to the second that the original pearl colour is a three-stage process, with a brown basecoat beneath and a clear top coat above. Paul wasn't bothered about any of that, he just liked it, and when you see this car in the sun it looks wild. While that was away being done, he concentrated his efforts on the floorpan, painting that in far more conventional black himself at home and building it back up with a few modifications along the way. It's nothing overly fancy, just a homemade 2½-inch narrowed and adjustable beam, stock VW front disc brakes (the original car was a 1300 remember, so came with drums all round), Koni red shocks, a trapeze bar and a Gene Berg intermediate mount. Paul: "I really have to thank my mate, Roy van Hoef, he was my helping hand with so many things on this car."

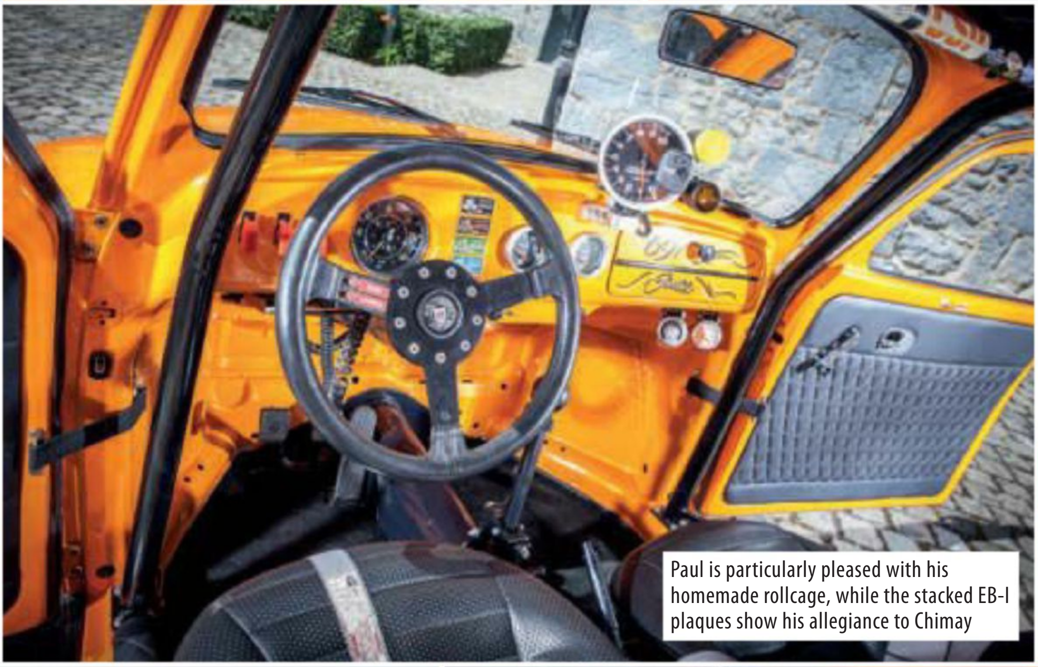
Meanwhile, Scary Harry was busy assembling a 2017cc stroker motor with Paul's prize possessions – a pair of 48IDA Webers. To make up that cubic capacity, inside the clearanced and full-flowed case nestle a CB Performance 87.4mm Super Race crank and 5.5-inch H-beam rods, hanging onto a set of Mahle 90.5s for dear life. With a lopey, 310-degree, Web Cam 86C grind that doesn't even get out of bed before 3,000rpm and Pauter Machine 1.3:1 rockers, it was always going to come down to the heads and compression to make this combination work, and a pair of CB Performance Super Mag 044s with

>

To give the front disc brakes some chance of biting, Paul has gone for 165/65 rubbers on the front, with straight up 205/70s putting the power down

Nothing says revs like a 5-inch monster tach

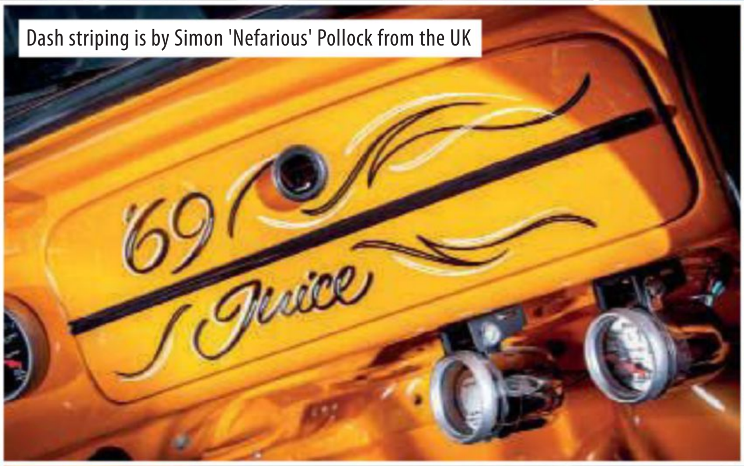
Carpeting extends just to the boot floor and the floorpan for a little nod to sound deadening



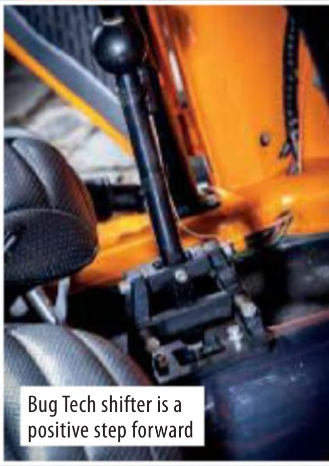
Paul is particularly pleased with his homemade rollcage, while the stacked EB-I plaques show his allegiance to Chimay

SIMPSON
SIMPSON

Cool bucket seats have been pirated from a Simca Rallye 1. Note upholstered door bars



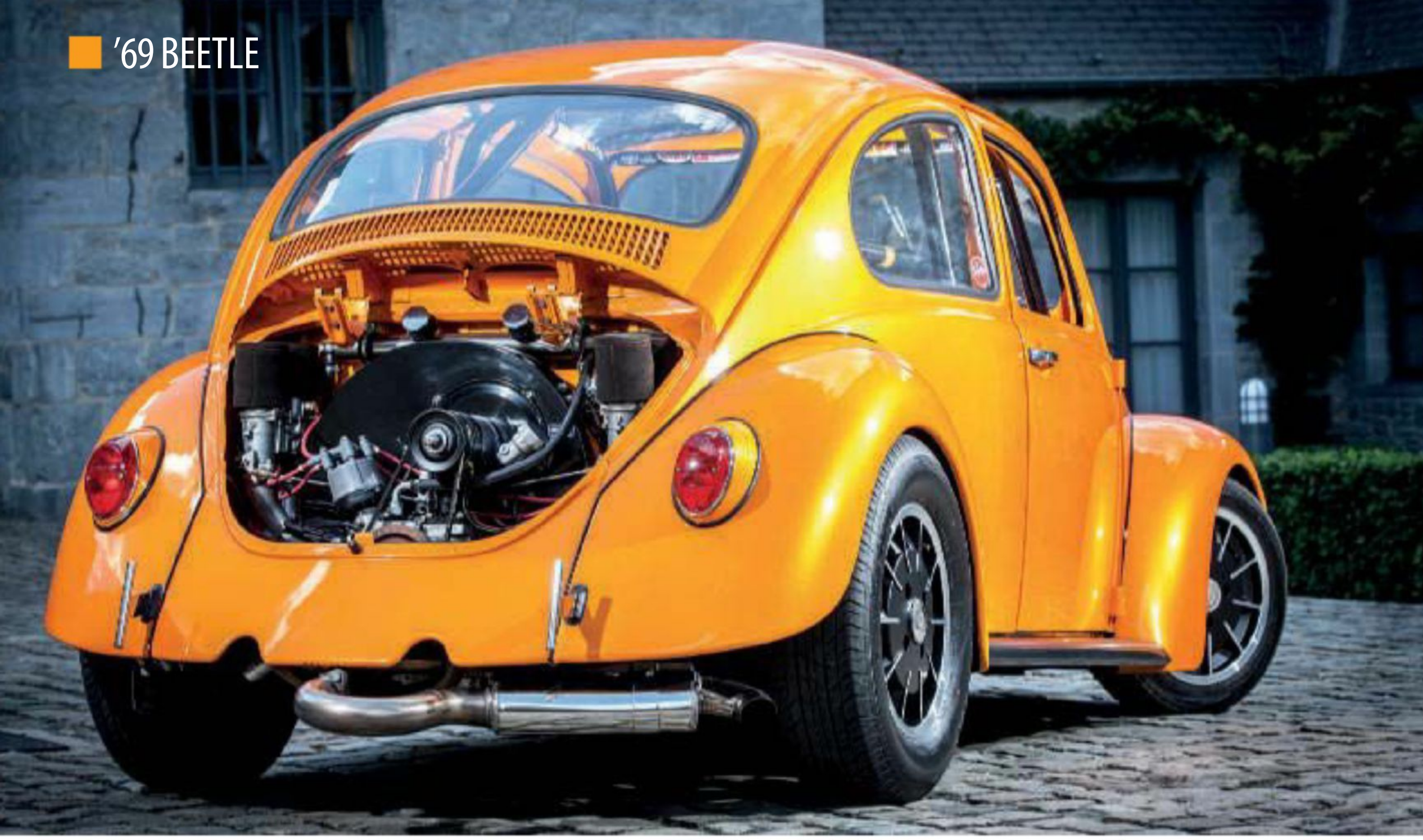
Dash striping is by Simon 'Nefarious' Pollock from the UK



Bug Tech shifter is a positive step forward

EMPI
Auto Meter
AIRMIGHTY
CHIMAY
CSP

Diamond pleat may have been done to death on T5s of late, but used sparingly on a Beetle it still works for us



Rear ¾ view really emphasises the classic Cal Look rake on Paul's Bug. He made his own 2½-inch narrowed beam, but only to bring the 5½-inch replica Burners inside the 'arches

40mm intake and 35.5mm exhaust valves were a good starting point. Screwed down for a 10.5:1 compression ratio, on the Scary dyno this produced a healthy 131bhp. But, as it says in the notes for the cam, "Expect a power band from 3,500-7,500rpms. The more head work and carburetion, the better the top end will be." And so after driving the car around for a while, Paul, with the help of his friend, Martijn Cornelissen, took it apart and set to porting and polishing the heads in the style of CB's Mini Wedges.

Boxing clever

"I knew I had to have a stronger gearbox to cope with the new engine, so I put a Super Diff in the stock one, but it wasn't enough. In fact, I broke two gearboxes before I had to admit I needed a professionally built 'box. It's now got a stronger first gear, steel shift forks, a heavy duty side plate and a Super Diff. It's good for 200bhp and for slicks and maybe even nitrous. I haven't broken it yet, but I have tried!"

"It took me a year and a half to complete the restoration, and the first place I drove it was to a Cal Look meeting in the middle of the country. The car ran well, but the ride home was scary as a bit of wiring behind the dash melted, causing all the electrics to shut down. I was lucky that was all it did." Since then, the main focus has been the engine, tweaking and tuning it to move that dyno figure closer to Paul's ultimate goal of 200bhp. "That's what I really want," he says with a grin, "and I'll keep working on the engine until I reach that." On its most recent pulls on Scary Harry's dyno, the engine recorded a very creditable 157bhp at 6,800rpm, with 143ft.lbs of torque. With that, Paul has been able to return to the events that inspired him so much in the first place and compete, racking up two first place trophies in class 5 sprinting at both IKW Budel and IKW Wanroij. He may still be a way off that 200bhp goal but, considering how far he's already come from the 40bhp the car started with, he's definitely heading in the right direction. Which all just goes to prove you shouldn't always do what your parents want. ■

"200bhp... That's what I really want"

BEHIND THE WHEEL

I grew up in this car. My mum and dad had it from when I was two years old, and they used to take me to school in it when it was raining. When I was a bit older my dad used to take me with him in it to the VW meetings, and when they gave me this car for my own in 2005, he asked me to please keep the car original!

Well, I have kept it but, as you see, it's not exactly original any more. I blame it all on Le Bug Show at Spa Francorchamps and the Internationaal Kever Weekend at Budel. It was there I saw the light and found Cal Look. After that, all I wanted was big wheels in the back, small in the front, nose down and a big engine! After several engine rebuilds, I haven't yet reached my goal of 250bhp, but with 157bhp the car is a lot more fun to drive than it was as a stock 1300, and now I can take my dad to VW shows, and get there a bit quicker than we used to! ■

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L'experience

The best VW show in the world? Maybe, but there's no denying Spa is always a weekend to remember

Words and photos Mark Walker

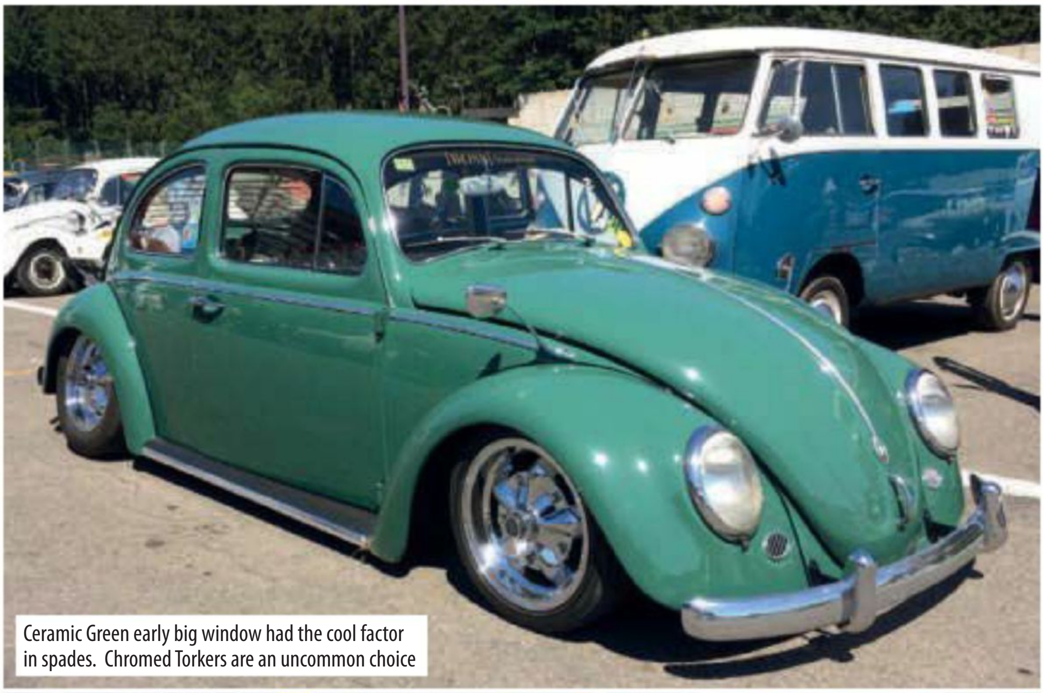
Having been to VW shows the world over, I still maintain Spa is the best show I've ever been to. The quality and variety of cars is always outstanding and, unlike UK VW shows of late, there are no T4s or T5s in the main show areas. Having arrived at lunchtime on the Saturday, we only had a few hours to check out the show and have a quick skirt around the swapmeet before it was time for the Grand Parade. Driving your VW around the Spa F1 circuit with hundreds of other VWs is something that really needs to be experienced.

With the Parade over, we headed out to Stavelot to our campsite for the rest of the weekend. It's worth noting here that the show entry fee includes camping, but be prepared for an all-night party, portaloos and no showers. Hence why we elected to stay somewhere else!

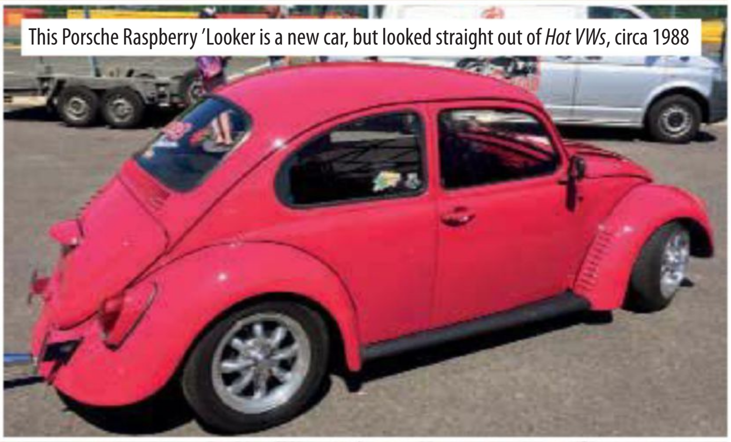
After a chilly night under canvas, we headed back to the show about 11am, parking in the shade and enjoying a traditional Euro show breakfast of salami, cheese and baguette. The show seemed a little quieter on Sunday this year, but there were still a lot of awesome cars. I made the mistake of telling my buddy, Johnny, what parts I was looking for and he made sure I bought every last one, and more besides, all for just €105.

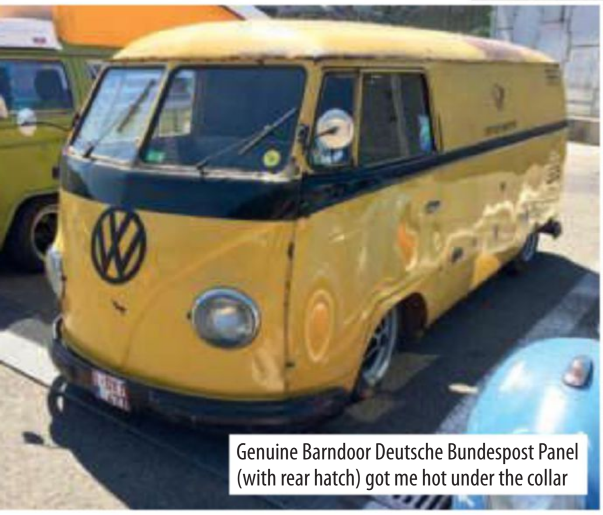
We decided to stay on another night this year and head home on the Monday. The trusty '68 performed faultlessly there and back, so the tools and spares we packed weren't needed, though they came in handy when we stopped to help a cool 15-window with Theo Decker conversion that had broken down just down outside the circuit. ■

We really liked the custom detailing on the Randar Circus wheels

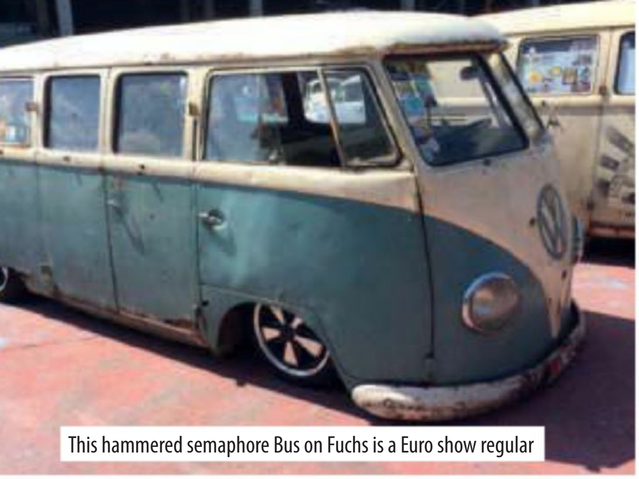

Ceramic Green early big window had the cool factor in spades. Chromed Torkers are an uncommon choice

Apparently, this Jack Russell had never heard of Mix Master Mike

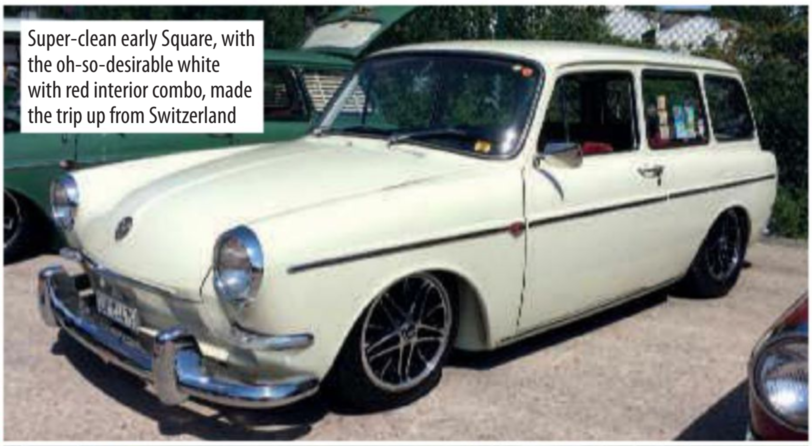

This Porsche Raspberry 'Looker is a new car, but looked straight out of *Hot VWs*, circa 1988


Genuine Barndoor Deutsche Bundespost Panel (with rear hatch) got me hot under the collar

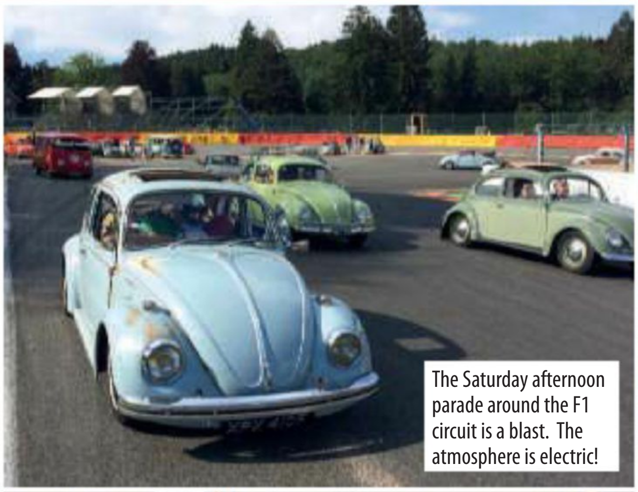
The sheer quantity of quality cars, along with a fun European road trip, keeps me coming back year after year



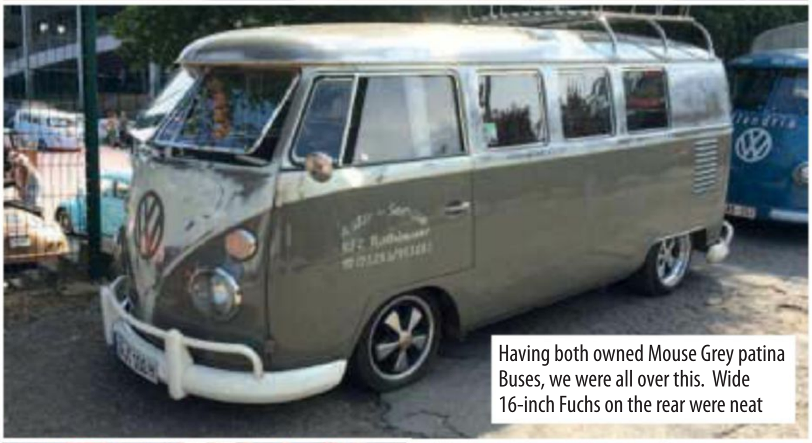
This hammered semaphore Bus on Fuchs is a Euro show regular



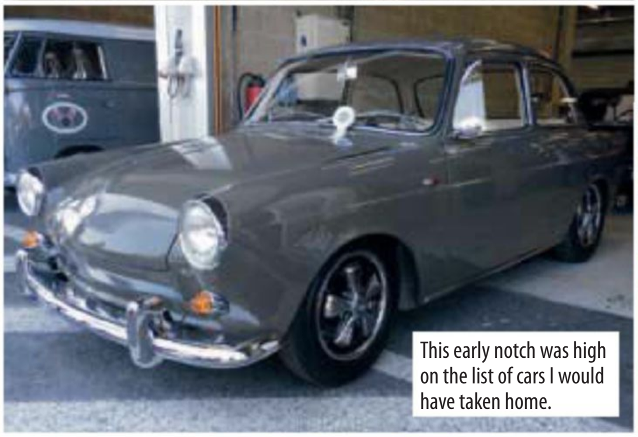
Super-clean early Square, with the oh-so-desirable white with red interior combo, made the trip up from Switzerland



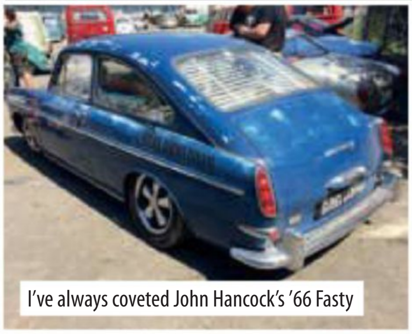
The Saturday afternoon parade around the F1 circuit is a blast. The atmosphere is electric!



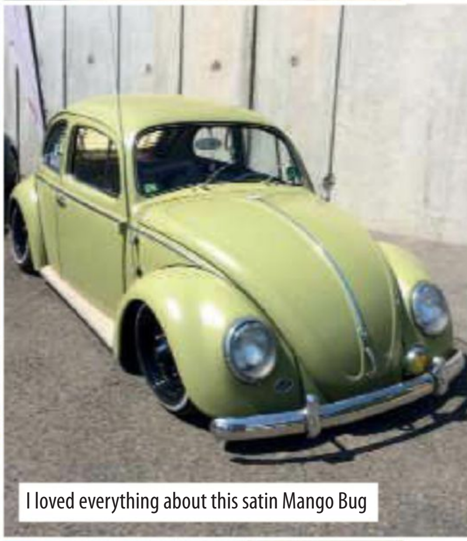
Having both owned Mouse Grey patina Buses, we were all over this. Wide 16-inch Fuchs on the rear were neat



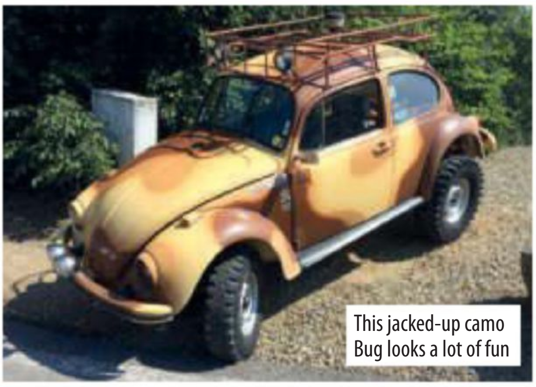
This early notch was high on the list of cars I would have taken home.



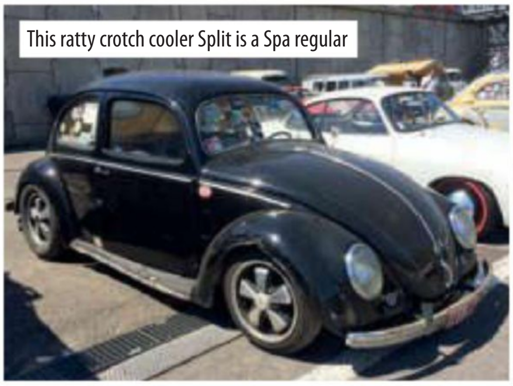
I've always coveted John Hancock's '66 Fasty



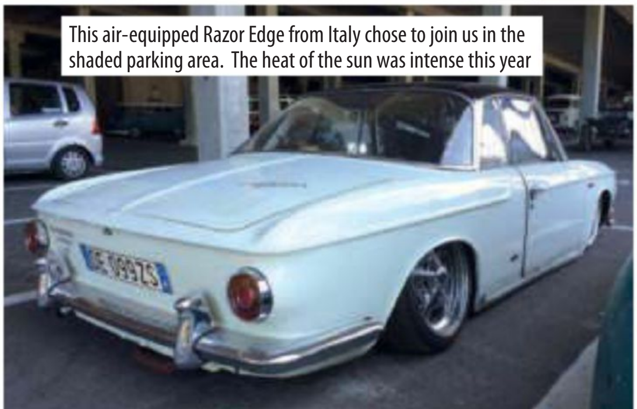
I loved everything about this satin Mango Bug



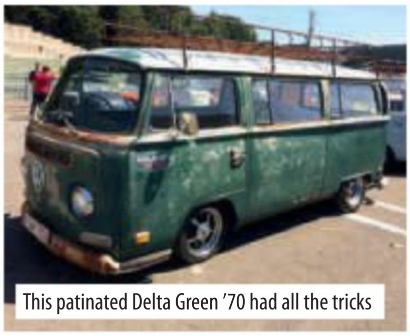
This jacked-up camo Bug looks a lot of fun



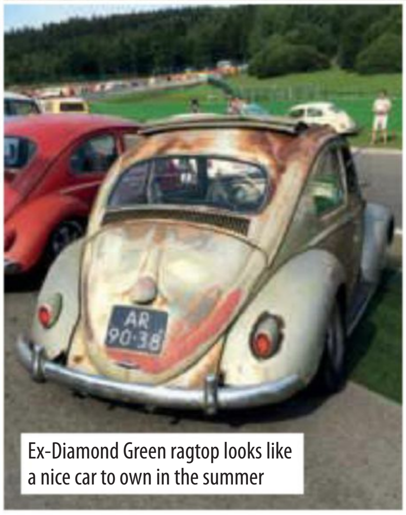
This ratty crotch cooler Split is a Spa regular



This air-equipped Razor Edge from Italy chose to join us in the shaded parking area. The heat of the sun was intense this year



This patinated Delta Green '70 had all the tricks

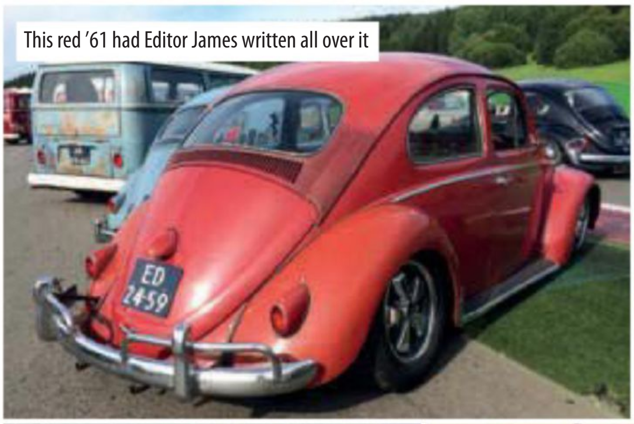


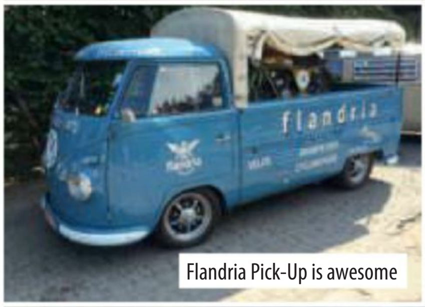
Ex-Diamond Green ragtop looks like a nice car to own in the summer

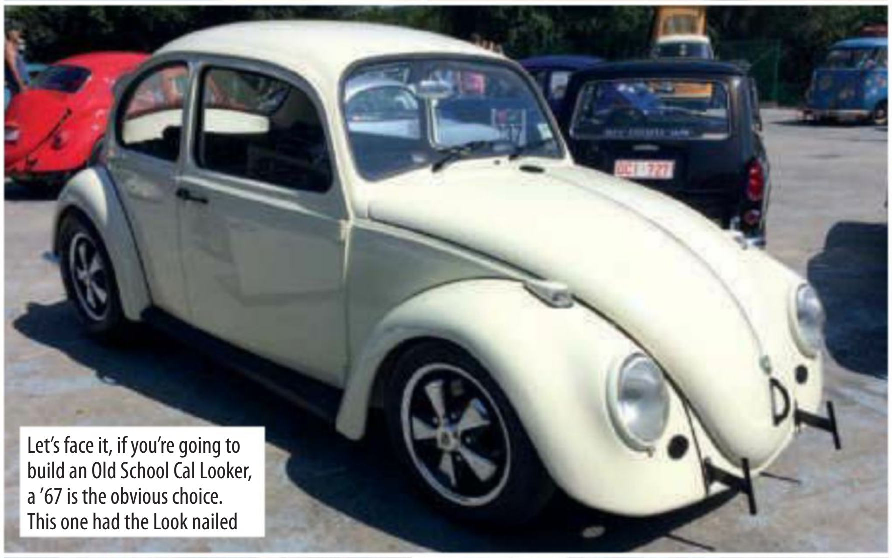
ROAD TRIP

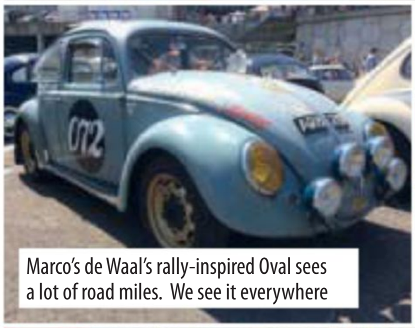
After some frantic sound deadening and fitting of some comfy seat covers by my VW partner in crime, Johnny Heather, we hit the road from Portsmouth for a planned 00:20 Eurotunnel train. Even though I built the suspension to be 'sensibly low', I hadn't accounted for the floor-mounted cameras in the carriages, which, no matter how I tried, I just couldn't avoid.

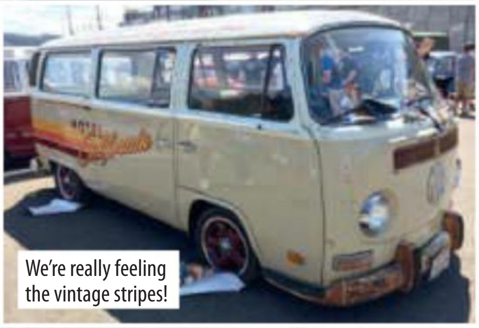
With that trauma behind us, we checked into our IBIS Budget hotel in Calais and awoke early the next morning, excited to hit the road. The trip from Calais to Spa is largely spent on the A16 / E40, skirting the Brussels Ring, before hitting the E42 south just beyond Liege. Be aware, the area around Spa Francorchamps is very hilly, but the '68 took it all in its stride. Arriving in Spa, the weather was a pleasant 25degC, and stayed that way, though this isn't always the case in this region and the weather can change very quickly. Even if it does, it's still a great show. ■

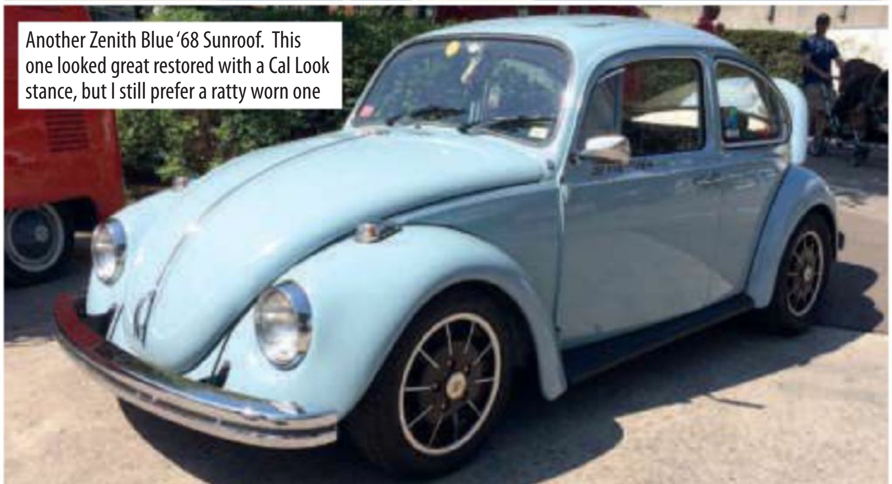

This red '61 had Editor James written all over it


Flandria Pick-Up is awesome


Let's face it, if you're going to build an Old School Cal Looker, a '67 is the obvious choice. This one had the Look nailed


Marco's de Waal's rally-inspired Oval sees a lot of road miles. We see it everywhere

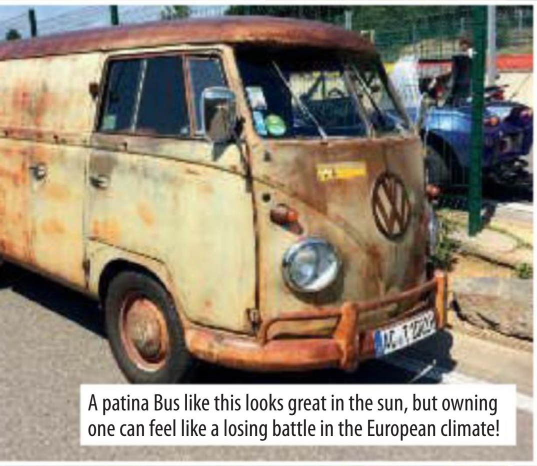

We're really feeling the vintage stripes!


Another Zenith Blue '68 Sunroof. This one looked great restored with a Cal Look stance, but I still prefer a ratty worn one

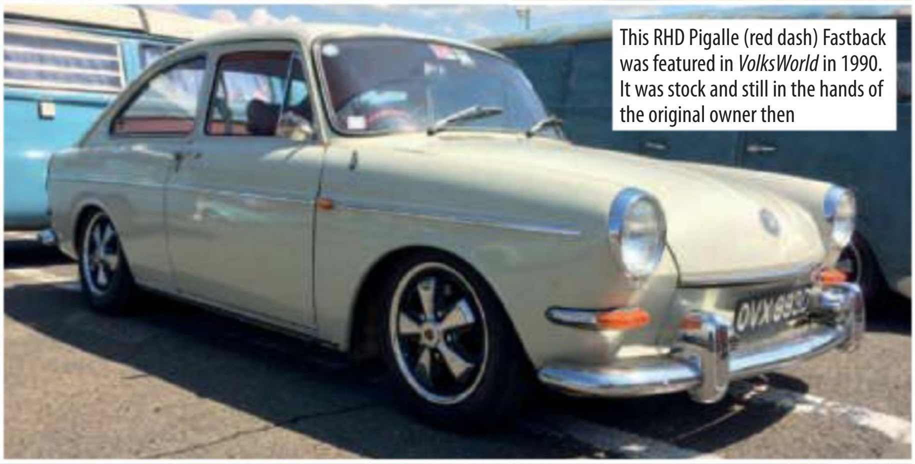
Slammed, US import '69 Single Cab was another one that had made the trip from Switzerland

We spotted this 15-window broken down as we were leaving on the Sunday. For a bit of our time we were rewarded with peace of mind, Belgian beer and two new friends

I was loving this subtle Savannah Beige '68



A patina Bus like this looks great in the sun, but owning one can feel like a losing battle in the European climate!

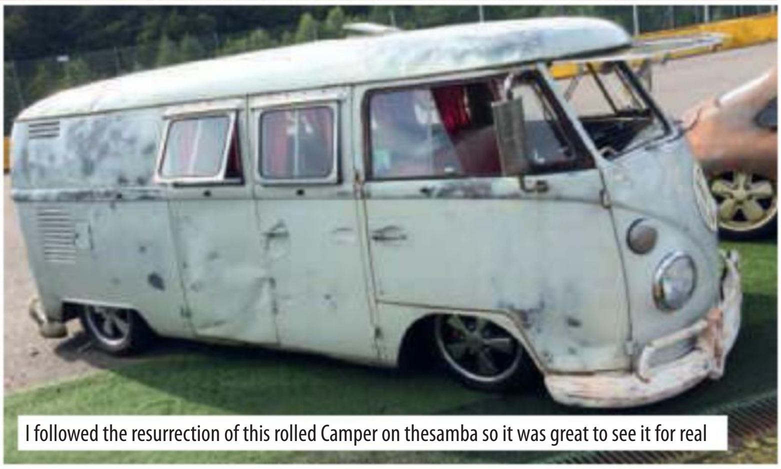


This RHD Pigalle (red dash) Fastback was featured in *VolksWorld* in 1990. It was stock and still in the hands of the original owner then

Pausing for one of many photo stops during the track parade

Headlamp guards, hooded Alberts and perfectly detailed Fuchs made this lovely ragtop stand out

Unusual wheel detailing and killer stance worked on this Fastback



I followed the resurrection of this rolled Camper on thesamba so it was great to see it for real

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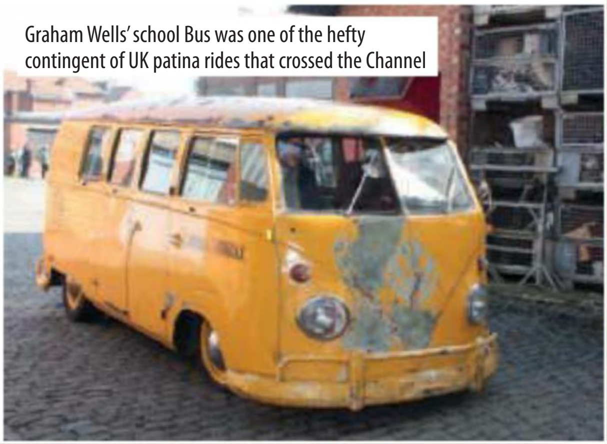

Graham Wells' school Bus was one of the hefty contingent of UK patina rides that crossed the Channel

Lloyd Jackson was first through the gate in his slammed Deluxe

The vast majority of the assembled revellers at the brewery were Brits. It gave the Saturday gathering a Bug Jam vibe, only with much better beer on tap

Ninove 2016

Freddy Files virgin, James, pops his cherry

Words and photos James Peene

No offence to anyone who has ever covered this show for us in the past but, having just returned from my first taste of The Freddy Files, I have to say I think we've been doing it a huge disservice.

For one reason or another, not least the fact that this show is usually held the week prior to The *VolksWorld* Show every year, I've just never been able to make it over, until now. With our own show pushed back a little later in the year, the stars were in alignment, so off I trotted.

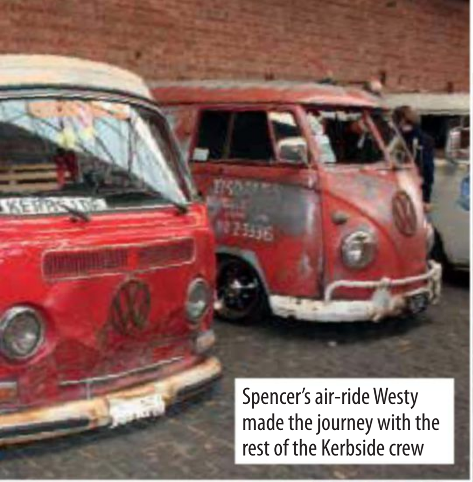
If, like me, you've never attended this show before, the fact that it means taking your VW abroad shouldn't be anything to worry about. Travelling via the Channel Tunnel, once on the other side, it's only an hour and half to two hours' driving time to Ninove. There's always roadside support on hand too, as loads of Brits make the annual pilgrimage, plus there's an organised cruise you can travel with if you're not a lone wolf.

For 2016, the convoy was organised by Air Monkeys and 65Deluxe. As per usual, it met in Calais at the Bonjour Services and stopped at a couple of points on the way to the Witkap Brewery. Due to some technical cock-up on the train, we missed the cruise, so just put pedal to the metal and blasted to our rendezvous with some Belgian beer.

Being one of the first through the doors, we were able to watch everyone pour in, and the overriding impression here was that the majority of people in attendance were Brits.

Mexican taxi was a simply, but really cool look for a late model Bug

Outlaw 356 coupé ticked all our boxes



Spencer's air-ride Westy made the journey with the rest of the Kerbside crew

Craig Stealth Petty's 1970 Deluxe raised some eyebrows amongst the organisers when it scraped into the brewery. It's very low!

We've been trying to feature this super clean Double Cab for a while now

Former cover car, Doug Flynn's 1303 Cabriolet enjoying the sunshine

Orange base model was a cool little ride. We cruised with it for a bit on our way to Belgium

Stock Razor Edge or slammed Karmann Ghia coupé, which would you choose?

Satin paint and Porsche Schachbrett (Pasha) upholstery was a cool look

Not air-cooled, not allowed in Ninove on Sunday!

Metallic scallops and yellow tints make for one interesting ride. Feature in *C&B* coming soon

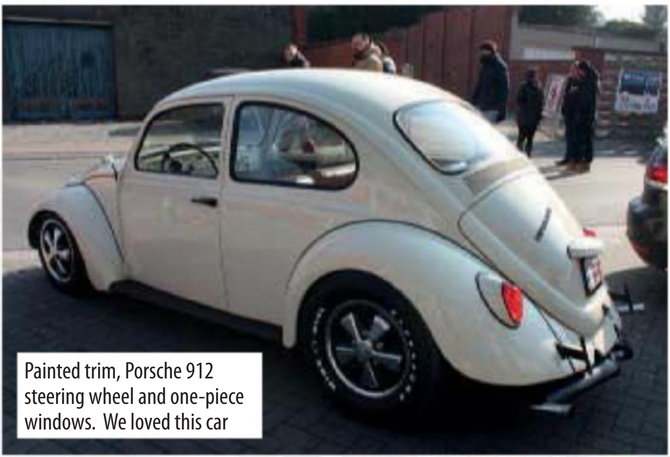
Proof that old VWs never die, they just get lower, cooler and driven to shows 100s of miles from home. Good to see the Lyle's TV Bus out and about

Just the right amount of patina, stance and attitude. We love Steve Gilbert's Square

Belgian Trekker was a bit of all white (sorry)

The Freddy Files

This Dutch Zwitter was a top looking ride and it was for sale, too


Painted trim, Porsche 912 steering wheel and one-piece windows. We loved this car

Apparently, this isn't part of the main show, but something put on for whoever wants to come along. Anyone would think us Limeys had a drink problem.

That was the Saturday pretty much done and dusted then. Unlike many, I bought more Witkap than I drank on the day, so I had a crate left over on Sunday and zero hangover, which I was mercifully pleased about, because the experience that unfurled in front of me on Sunday was enough to melt my brain anyway.

Like I say, I think we've done this show a disservice, because even though I'd seen pictures of it, and knew that the main event takes place in a town that is VW parking only, I just thought it was a small cobbled town a few streets long. How wrong I was.

Ninove is actually a rather large town, and the scale of this show is epic. There are thousands of air-cooled cars, parked everywhere. They're on every street, in every side road and filling up all the spaces in those funny little town squares you get in Europe. They're everywhere.

No pub

The town is only open to air-cooled VWs and Porsches, and there's a theme every year. For 2016, it was Happy Campers, so Type 2s were out in force. And yet, unlike pretty much every UK show, they didn't dominate proceedings. On the Continent, they're still massively into Beetles, Ghias and Type 3s and it made a nice change to see Type 2s taking a back seat for once.

What didn't strike me until after I got home was there were no flyers on any of the cars. This is a "no pub" event and flyers are banned, which makes for better pictures and less stuff to throw away when you get back to your car.

What else? Well, loads of cool swapmeet clobber. Not your usual offerings of rusty / oil-soaked tat, but rare NOS stuff and trinkets like Hazet Assistents, one of which I took home with me. Oh, and as an added bonus, there was an awesome motorcycle show taking place just off to one side of the town.

I came home from this show feeling totally energised by it all. I'll definitely be back next year, and so should you. ■

James took one of these home with him

There's no chance of using those in Belgium!

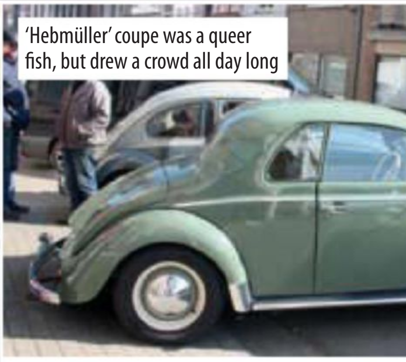
Firestone Wide Ovals and Wolfies looked period perfect on this Belgian '70's Bug

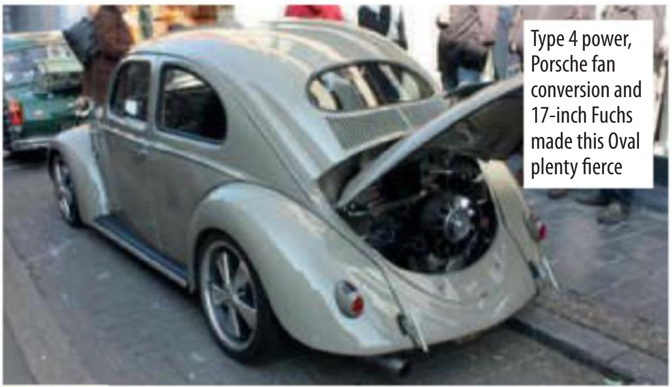
The engine bay in a Ghia is made for an Okrasa engine kit, as this sweet Lowlight shows

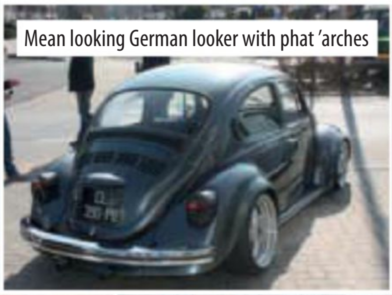
Orange is the new black, if this fab Resto Cal is any kind of marker

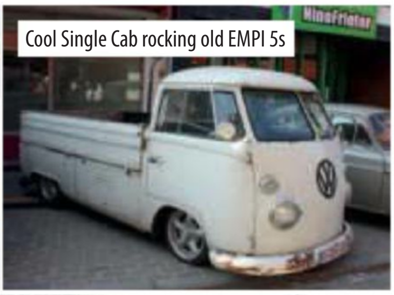
This Oval Cabriolet stopped is in our tracks. Loving the fender skirts

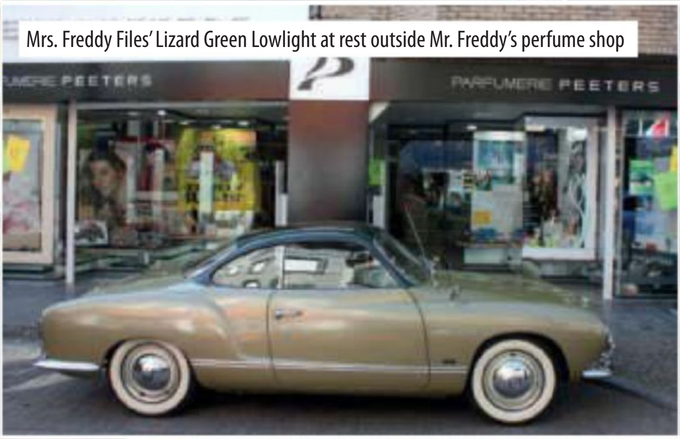
How hard is this patina'd Cal Look Split? The stance was absolutely bob on

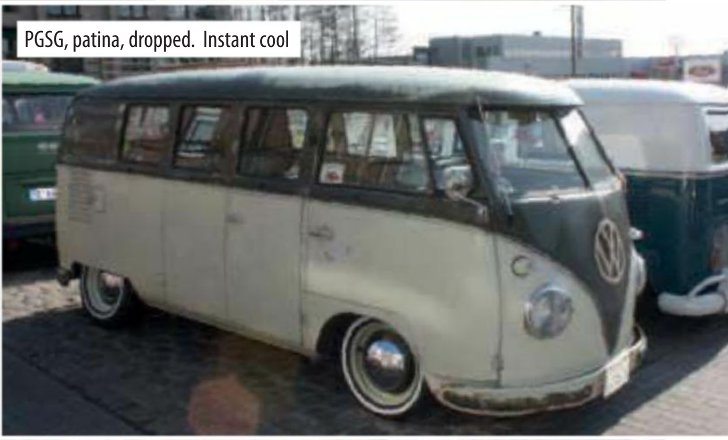

'Hebmüller' coupe was a queer fish, but drew a crowd all day long

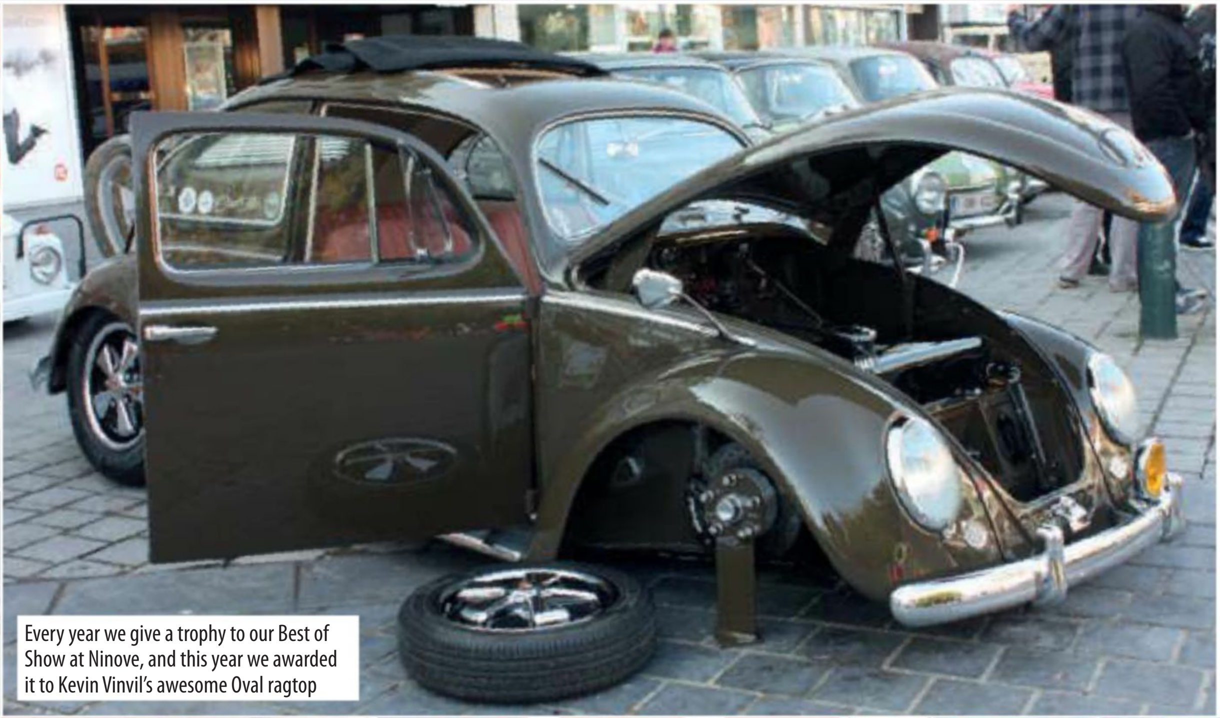

Type 4 power, Porsche fan conversion and 17-inch Fuchs made this Oval plenty fierce

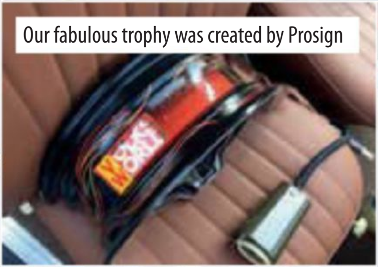

Mean looking German looker with phat 'arches

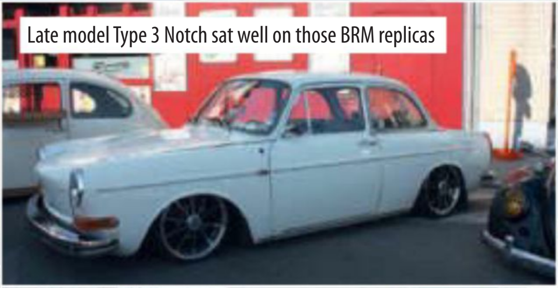

Cool Single Cab rocking old EMPI 5s

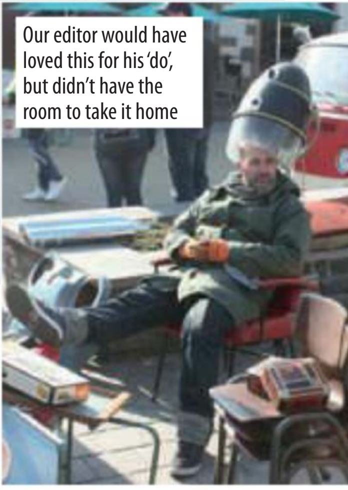

Mrs. Freddy Files' Lizard Green Lowlight at rest outside Mr. Freddy's perfume shop

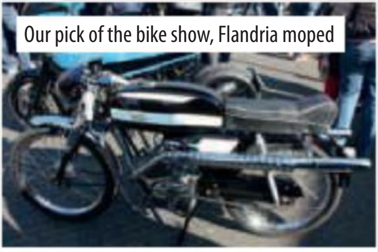

PGSG, patina, dropped. Instant cool

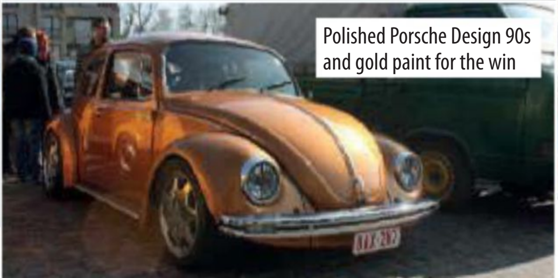

Every year we give a trophy to our Best of Show at Ninove, and this year we awarded it to Kevin Vinvil's awesome Oval ragtop


Our fabulous trophy was created by Prosign


Late model Type 3 Notch sat well on those BRM replicas


Our editor would have loved this for his 'do', but didn't have the room to take it home

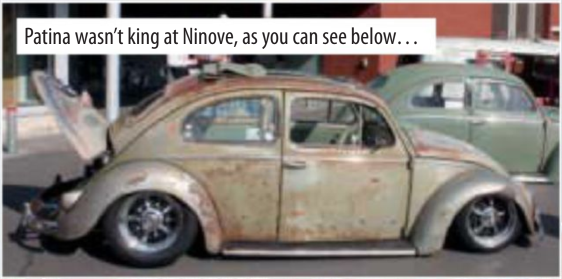

Our pick of the bike show, Flandria moped


Polished Porsche Design 90s and gold paint for the win

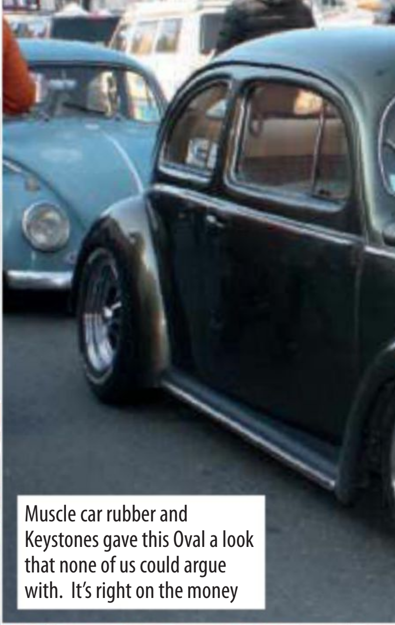
The Freddy Files

Lotus White Cal Looker with ragtop had all the ingredients you could possibly want in a Beetle

How fat are those banded steels? They're cock on



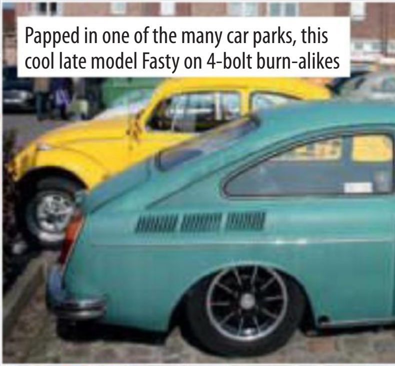
Patina wasn't king at Ninove, as you can see below…



Muscle car rubber and Keystones gave this Oval a look that none of us could argue with. It's right on the money

L227 Stratos Silver Blue makes for a perfect Oval Resto Cal

…shiny cars were in the majority on the Sunday. Hurrah!



Papped in one of the many car parks, this cool late model Fasty on 4-bolt burn-alikes

Kung-Fu Panda or black and white Brasilia?

Whenever you see a Judson supercharger you have to take a photograph, it's the law

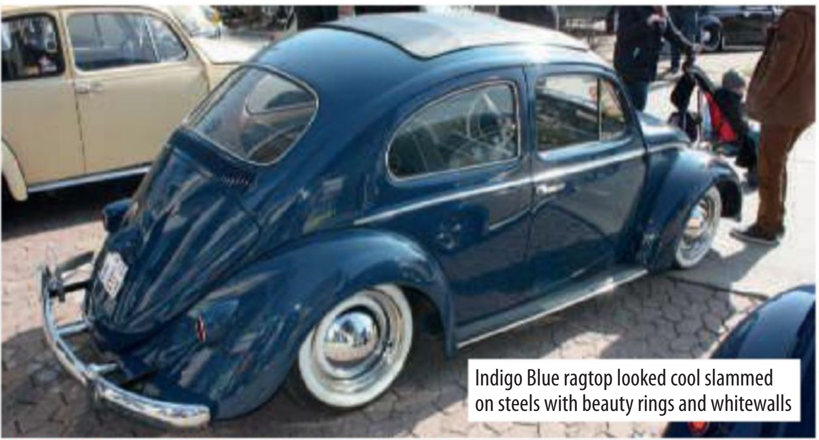
Chrome coach bolts in all the trim holes were a nice touch

Loving the EMPI 8s and louvres on *Rasp B Dream*

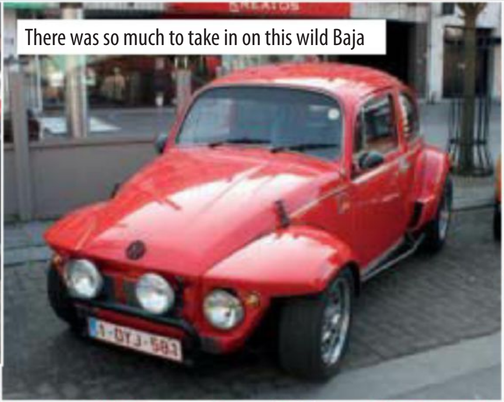
Wild boar head on the spare wheel? Okay then…

Shiny Mango 11-window, patina Bay, stock late model Bug. Something for everyone on every street

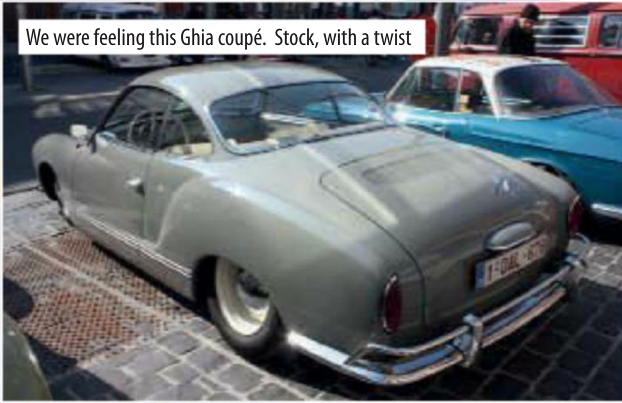
We saw a couple of cars sporting the Maskes Service logo, but this 356 was without doubt the one we'd have taken home if we could



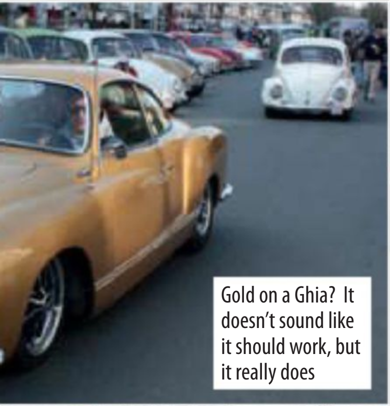
Indigo Blue ragtop looked cool slammed on steels with beauty rings and whitewalls



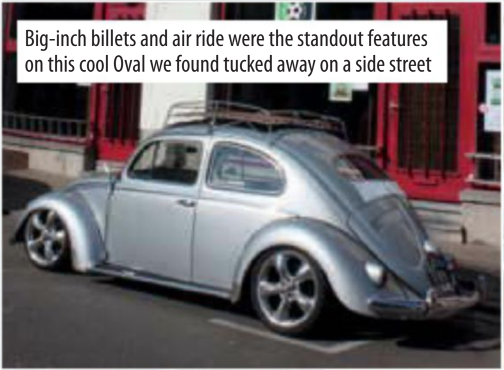
There was so much to take in on this wild Baja



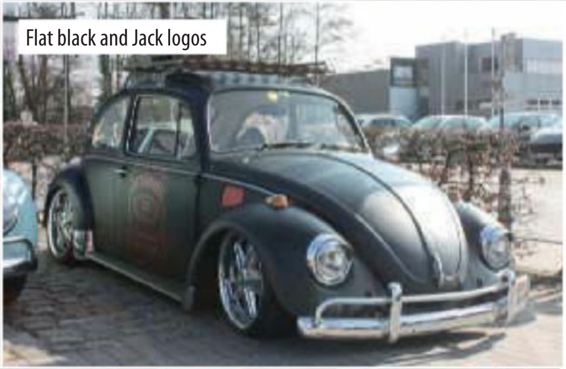
We were feeling this Ghia coupé. Stock, with a twist



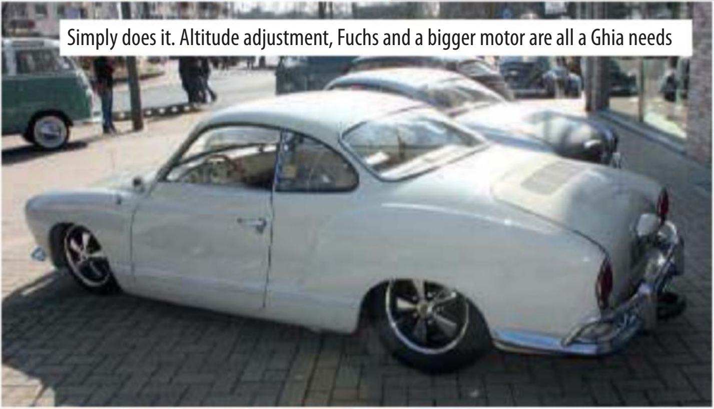
Gold on a Ghia? It doesn't sound like it should work, but it really does



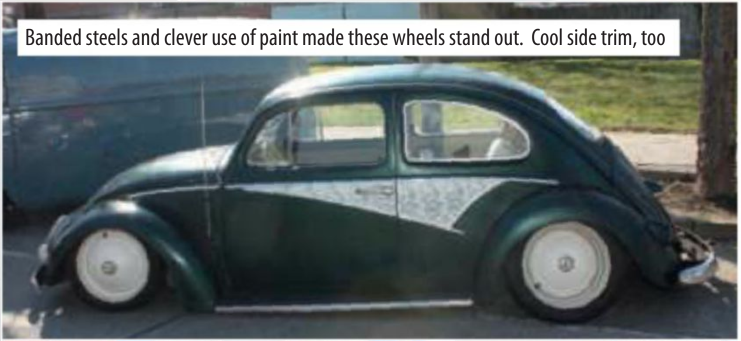
Big-inch billets and air ride were the standout features on this cool Oval we found tucked away on a side street



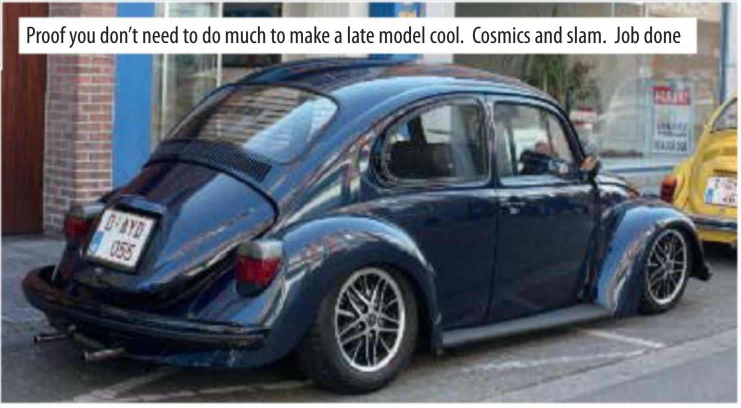
Flat black and Jack logos



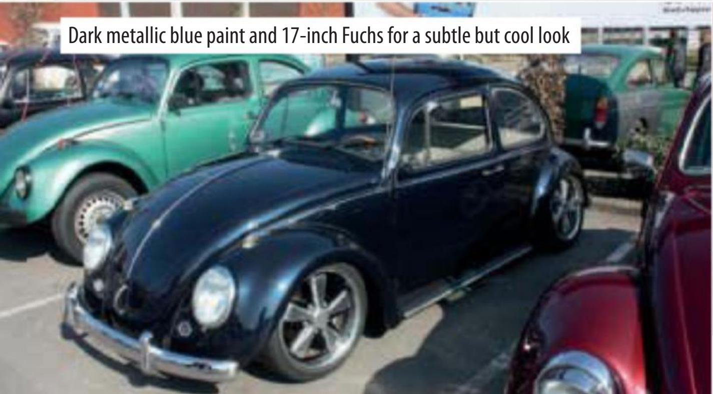
Simply does it. Altitude adjustment, Fuchs and a bigger motor are all a Ghia needs



Banded steels and clever use of paint made these wheels stand out. Cool side trim, too



Proof you don't need to do much to make a late model cool. Cosmics and slam. Job done



Dark metallic blue paint and 17-inch Fuchs for a subtle but cool look

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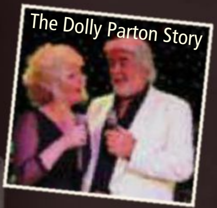

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Going up to go down. Front end removed and engine out at this point

OWNER INFO

NAME: James Peene

JOB: Editor

CAR: '60 Beetle

WORK THIS MONTH: Suspension and engine mods gather pace; engine out; beam off and putting a large dent in my wallet!

Under the cosh

James is beginning to doubt if Cinderella will make it to the ball

Where does time go? It drags when there's something you don't want to do, but disappears like a fart in the wind when you're thrashing to get a car on the road for something.

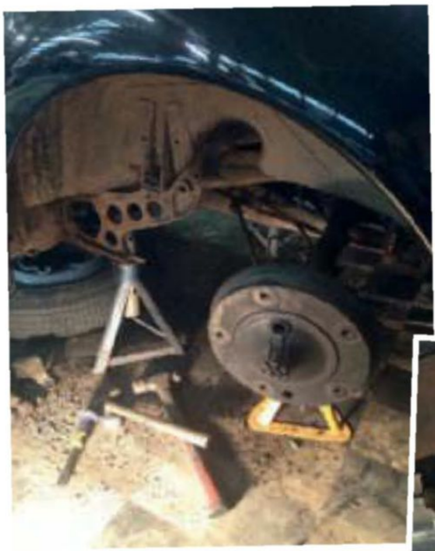
At the time of writing, The *VolksWorld* Show is fast approaching and the general consensus is that if I had another week, the car would be mustard but, as it stands, the chances of it being ready and MoT'd in time are evaporating, fast.

The truth is my car shouldn't need an MoT but, because it was first registered in the UK in 1961, the DVLA say it's a '61. The original bill of sale and corresponding documents I sent them to get the date of manufacture changed on the V5 weren't enough to convince the helpful people in Swansea and, three months later, they sent it all back, with my V5 still dated as 1961, and the requirement for an MoT.

I was going to MoT the car anyway, for peace of mind, but it's another complication I could do without, and one that might prove to be the final spanner in the works. Time will tell.

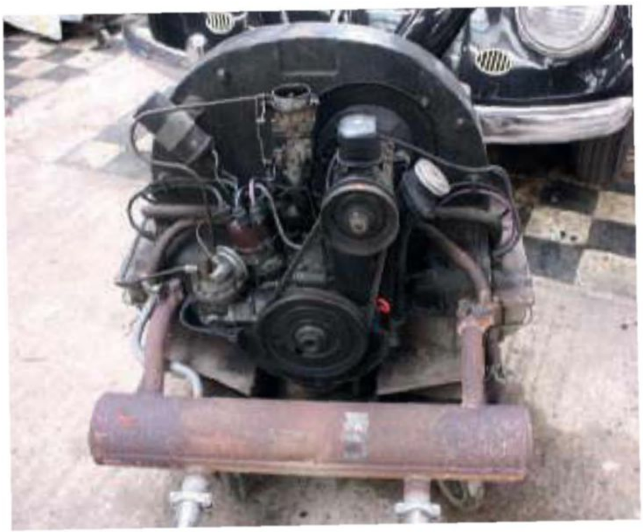
I'm all about complications, too. With the engine removed to replace the clutch, I decided the time was right to convert the car to 12V. This was partly Steve's fault, as he knew a man selling a small 6V size, but 12V, industrial starter motor. That would work perfectly on my 6V flywheel, I thought, so I bought it. I'd also need a 12V dynamo and, fortunately, Steve had one (a Porsche 356 item that had come off an aircraft at some point) on the shelf. Reason being, he'd bought another when he was tracing electrical gremlins on his car, but it turned out to be surplus to requirements, and fitted the bill perfectly.

The only problem was I need a 25A regulator. I bought one on eBay but, when it turned up, it was a regular 30A regulator. The chap selling it, and everyone else I spoke to, said it would

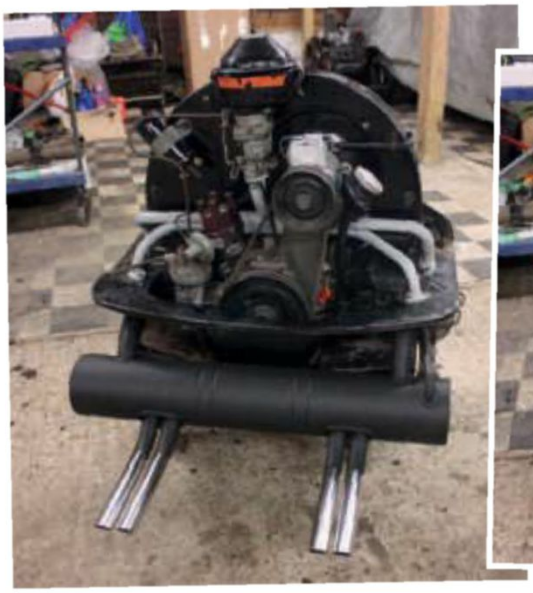


Torsion bar end caps removed and some rear end height adjustment taking place

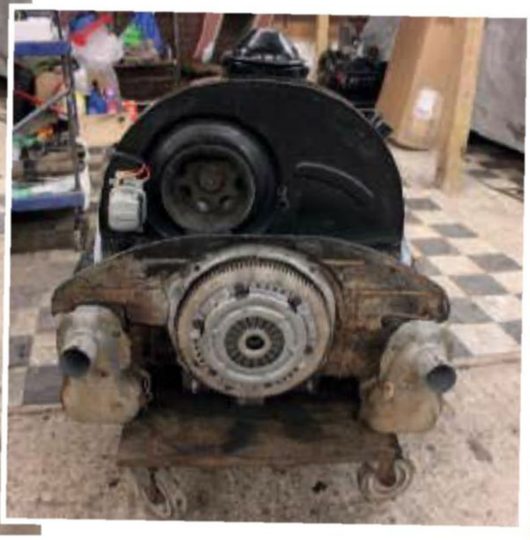
Here's the engine as it came out of the car. Note the cut 'n' shut pre-heater pipe bodge, done (badly) to fit the old repop exhaust



The rear brakes are now done, and this time the hub nuts will be done up and split pins fitted…



^ I'm loving the look of my new Abarth 4-tip exhaust



^ New 12V regulator has been fitted behind the fan housing to avoid butchering the original wiring

> My house reeked of oil and Gunk as I used my dining room to clean up all the suspension components. Yuck

be fine. However, all of Steve's research had said the 30A regulator *might* melt the solder inside. I didn't want to risk knackering my expensive dynamo, so tracked down the correct regulator and waited for it to arrive from Germany.

Waiting for parts has been the most exasperating part of the process. Many parts I've ordered have been out of stock, or there's been 'a problem with the system' etc. Fortunately, both Just Kampers and Machine 7 have been a godsend. Everything I've ordered through them has been delivered the next day and, bar one or two last bits, I think I now have everything I need to finish the car.

One of the parts I ordered through JK was one of the company's repro Abarth exhausts. The original inlet manifold had been hacked and welded to fit a replacement exhaust in the past. It was only when the time came to fit the replacement manifold I'd bought from The VW Engine Co. that I discovered the exhaust wouldn't line up. I needed a better quality exhaust, so bit the bullet and bought the Abarth I'd always fancied.

> "If I had another week, the car would be mustard"

Dropped

Finding someone to fit the king and links in my new dropped spindles wasn't easy either, but Ian Kent at E's Autos stepped into the breach and sorted mine. He also had the steering damper bracket I needed. Thanks Ian, you're a good egg.

What's left to do? Fit engine, upgrade the rest of the electrics to 12V, assemble the front suspension, align the car, bleed and adjust the brakes, MoT…

It's not the end of the world if the car misses The *VolksWorld* Show, but I'm not giving up just yet. ■

< Dropped spindles and fresh king and links will transform the look and feel of the Beetle's front end

< As Steve has blown up every regulator in Kent I had to buy this expensive 25A one from Germany. It's 25A, not the 30A a VW one normally is, as I'm using a Porsche dynamo

∨ 1960 was the last year Beetles didn't come with steering dampers. I want to fit one, and E's Autos supplied this bracket so I can do just that. Thanks Ian, you're a diamond

VOLKS WORLD PROJECT CARS

Day tripping

Owner: Steve Gosling
Cars: '61 ragtop, '67 Ghia, '70 Bay Window
This month: No work on the Bug as I've been twirling the spanners on James' '60, but the Bus is going like a trooper. I need a Propex heater though as it's brass monkeys driving it in winter

Owner: Gordie Woollacott
Car: '78 Westy
This month: Life just got busy! A shipment of three Buses from Texas showed up this morning to add to my ongoing Westy project. Oh, and there's an actual baby due in May!

Hoarder

Swedish meatball

Owner: Mark Walker
Car: '68 Beetle, '67 Beetle
This month: As you can read in the how to this month, I've swapped the dynamo and been cleaning up the rubbish paint repairs on my Swedish '67. 12V conversion next

Owner: Jon Robinson-Pratt
Car: '63 Beetle
This month: My Bug is finally back on the road, so now to more important jobs, like refreshing the wheels ready for The *VolksWorld* Show weekend

Wheely good fun

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It was like a big jigsaw puzzle and, judging by their body language, Graham and Mick had no interest in piecing it together

NAME: Cathal O'Toole

OCCUPATION: Recidivist rusty Beetle purchaser

CARS OWNED: GT Beetle, '77 Cal Look Beetle, '73 Riviera Camper

WORK THIS MONTH: Light a fire under myself to get my ass in gear and move this project forward

Getting in trim

Just as I was in danger of losing interest in my Bus project, things started to come together

My biggest issue over the last few months has been what to do with the interior. I had seen and loved so many bespoke interiors with their high-gloss curved units and thought 'oof, I'll have you' but then could see that was going to bring me right back to Landfill territory where I had planned to replace just the door cards, only to find myself looking at new TMI door cards beside 50-year-old seat covers and deciding they had to be changed, and then the original rubber mats looked tat, and so on.

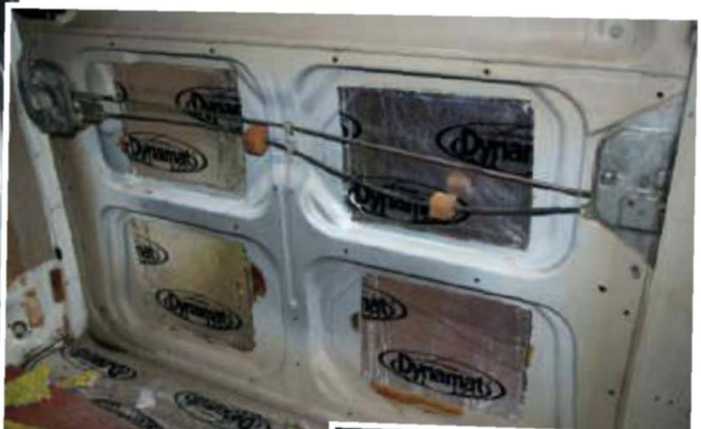
Deep down, I guess I knew that if I went down the shiny route I was going to be opening not only a can of worms but my wallet, big time. That had me questioning how I want the Bus to look, and that is like an original paint Bus, with pretty much stock rims and not lowered to within an inch of its life (because I want to use it and, if you knew the roads where I live, you'd know a dropped Bus is going to die a quick death). In other words, the not-so-precious look.

However, the original interior is toast, and I'm not a fan of a wardrobe in a Bus, mainly because I don't plan on randomly gatecrashing the Oscars and therefore have no need to carry my tux with me. I also think they block light and are a curse for LHD Buses in a RHD country.

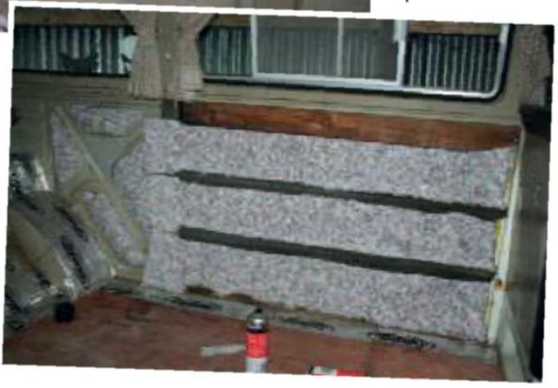
I knew my mate, Mick Lennon, had an interior for sale, so I rang him and asked him what he had and it turned out to be a Westfalia Berlin, complete bar the table top and swivel. Mick is the type of guy you can trust so, when he said it was in good, useable condition with only minor marks and chipping, I said I'll have it. When it arrived, I had to place it in the Bus and instantly knew I'd made the right choice. It looked perfect. Some of the wood needs to be replaced due to age, so I dropped the Bus at Tommy Sweeney's. Now Tommy is a carpenter to the stars, well, to the Mayor

Now that's service. A Westy Berlin interior, wrapped, palleted and delivered. Score!

Nothing fancier than a roll of regular household underlay, but its sound deadening qualities are excellent



Dynamat on all panels and now extra layers of loveliness with carpet underlay



A bit of spray glue to keep it in place and instant quiet and cosiness!

of Loughmore anyway, which is a big thing if you live in Loughmore! Before I dropped it at Tommy's though, I wanted to ensure the Bus was warm and quiet so, having covered the interior in Dynamat, I then went to my local carpet shop and bought a roll of thick underlay, which is the perfect material to use as sound deadening. I cut the pieces to size and spray glued them in place on the inside of the panels. It made a huge difference, with the tinny and hollow sound the Bus used to have a thing of the past. I've ordered natural sisal mats for the cab area from Mad Matz, which should be at my door in about three weeks. I bought a second hand Scat shifter from Pat Best and also took the opportunity to replace the rear gearbox coupling so the gear change is now smooth and precise. I should also thank Trevor Brady for being my 'phone a friend when the Bus jammed itself between gears one Saturday night. I thought I would have to drop the engine and 'box to sort the issue but, thanks to the fountain of knowledge that resides in Trev's cranium, he advised me to open the fill plug and gently nudge the cogs free with a long screwdriver. Amazingly enough, it worked. Thanks Mr. Brady. ■

> "Original paint… stock rims… not lowered to within an inch of its life"

Scat shifter and new coupling was installed to tighten up the gear change. Factory paint and no rust is a first for me!

After 43 years, the gearbox coupling had seen better days, so was replaced. It made a big difference

Mick wasn't jumping for joy, but I was rather pleased with my new interior

And here's where she sits now, awaiting her new interior at the hands of Tommy Sweeney

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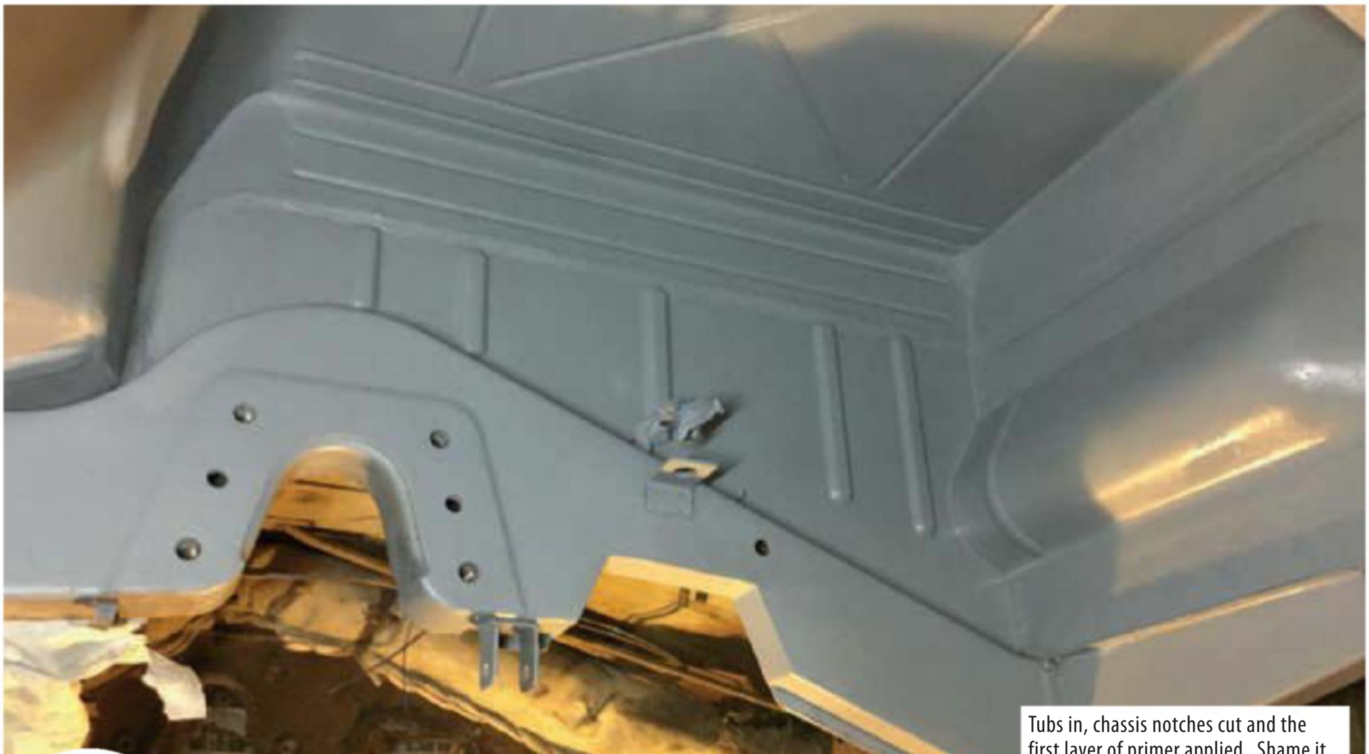


Tubs in, chassis notches cut and the first layer of primer applied. Shame it will be so low you won't see any of this

OWNER INFO

NAME: Steve Parsons

OCCUPATION: Graphic designer and illustrator

CAR: 1961 Split

WORK THIS MONTH: Raise steering box, notch chassis, prep underside for paint

Counting down

The clock is ticking to get the '61 ready for the new show season

It's 4.02am and I am wide awake with my head working overdrive. The number one reason for this is the 55-year-old hunk of junk sat in my garage. I promised myself that after almost killing myself trying to finish my old Karmann Ghia a few years back that I wouldn't put my body and mind through the same turmoil by setting a deadline for completion, but how quick we forget! I don't want this write up to sound all doom and gloom as lots of work has been completed, and I'm pretty happy with the outcome of most of it, I just wish I could find the off button once in a while.

A few months ago I decided that the Kombi was coming off the road for major height adjustment work, and that I would get it finished in plenty of time to drive it through the gates of Sandown Park for this year's *VolksWorld* Show. Well, as I write this, the show kicks off in just over two weeks, the list of jobs doesn't feel like it's shrinking and time ain't stopping for no man.

A squirt in the tubs

In my last report I had just finished installing one of the front wheelarch tubs pretty successfully, and the offside one went in just as well. They have now been filled and primered and are awaiting a squirt of top coat, once the Bus is back on its wheels and access is better. Speaking of which, if you plan on doing any work to the front end of a vehicle like mine in a cramped single garage, take my advice and take the cab doors off before driving it in! I didn't, and those doors have been the bane of my life for the past three months. I have had to learn contortionism to get some of the work done. They just don't open wide enough to allow easy access to the inside, especially when it's on extra high axle stands and you are 6ft 4!

Those extra high axle stands have been a godsend to get the front end high enough to enable me to clamber underneath to perform the surgery to the mechanics and metalwork for the Bus' new stance. Firstly, trying to get the steering box out on standard stands was impossible as the box and column come out as one piece, and my garage isn't long enough to slide it out at the desired angle. Once it was as high as it could go, removal was straightforward (apart from getting the steering wheel off!) and I could then mark up my chassis in preparation for the steering box raise.

One of the most important things when doing a steering box raise is to transfer the correct angle of the column and reflect this with the marks on the chassis. With this checked, double checked and then triple checked, I busted out the reciprocating saw and

> Dusty, dirty and looking very sorry for itself and thats just the owner!

It will be a pleasure re-assembling these cleaned and painted parts. They were thick with grease and grime before

'63-only dropped spindles will allow me to use late brakes on my early beam

New shoes. Three down, one to go…

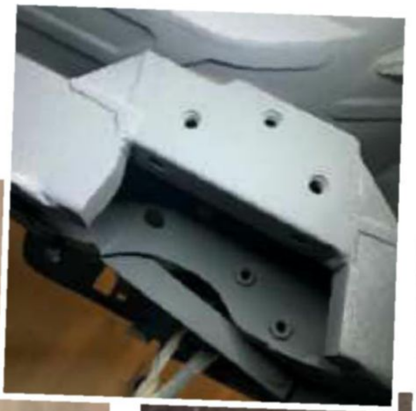
sliced the mother up! As I want my Bus to be very low when finished, I decided to add a 10mm notch to my box raise so it clears the underside of the floor section. It may sound like overkill, but chatting to a few folk who have seriously low Splits, it seems some of them still had issues with their boxes hitting the floor. Once all the open ends and strengthening gussets were added, the re-worked section was tacked into place, the steering box popped back in to check it all still lined up and then the plates seam welded into place.

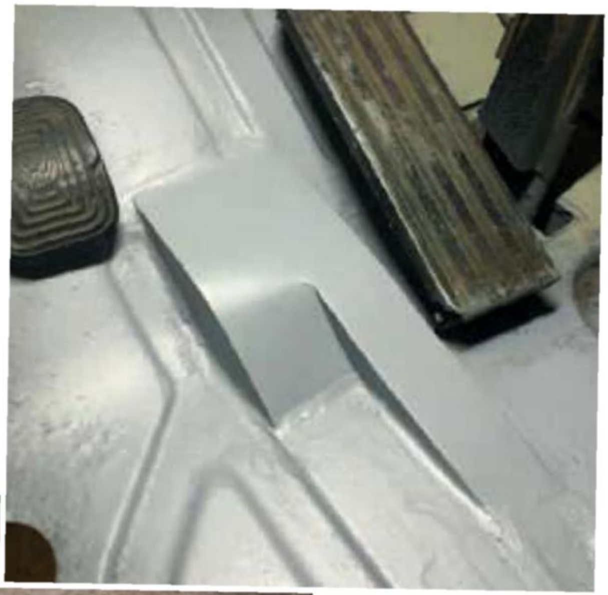
> "Once again, one mod leads to a re-working elsewhere"

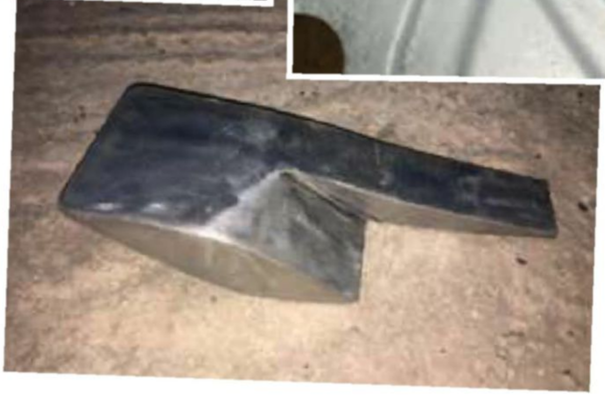
When one modification is complete, you can almost guarantee it leads to something else needing re-working to accommodate the alteration. The steering box sitting higher than stock means the pitman arm that connects to the drag link sits higher too and, as a result, fouls the floor. The answer is to create a bulge in the floor so all the parts can move freely without being impeded. After bolting everything up once again, and moving it every way possible to find its mximum parameters, I marked the section of floor that needed removing. Once removed, cardboard templates were made of the new floor segment before transferring these to fresh steel and welding it up. Me being an arty farty type, I seriously over thought the new addition in terms of aesthetics over form, and ended up creating something that a friend said looks like it should be on a plinth in a gallery! Once again, one mod leads to a re-working elsewhere, but fortunately not a big one this time. With my new Anish Kapoor-style sculpture in situ, the accelerator pedal needed moving by about 4mm and re-attaching as it just caught on the bottom corner. An easy fix, if only I'd taken my bloody doors off!

Other jobs completed are the chassis notches for the trailing arms, cutting and re-tapping the aforementioned arms, notching the brake pedal to clear the steering box raise, cutting and re-dimpling the beam leaves, degreasing, priming and painting all the front beam components that I'm re-using with my new beam and prepping the front underside for paint before reassembling it all.

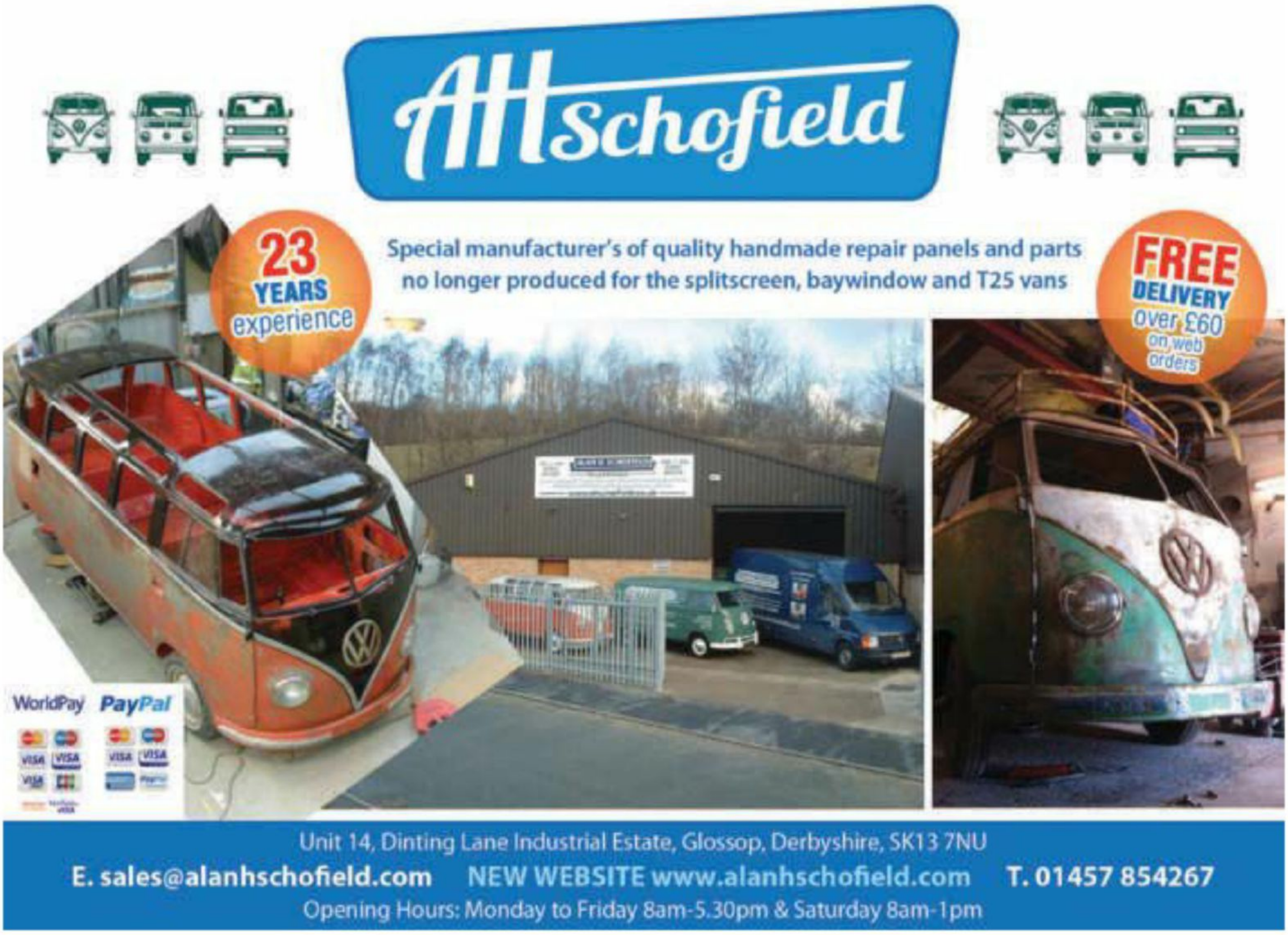
By the time you read this, and if you went to this year's *VolksWorld* Show, you will know whether I managed to get everything done in time, as right now I really have no idea if the Bus will be done or not. Wish me luck! ■







An essential modification when lowering a Bus is to raise the steering box. There's a fair amount of measuring, cutting and welding involved, but the most important thing is to ensure it's strong



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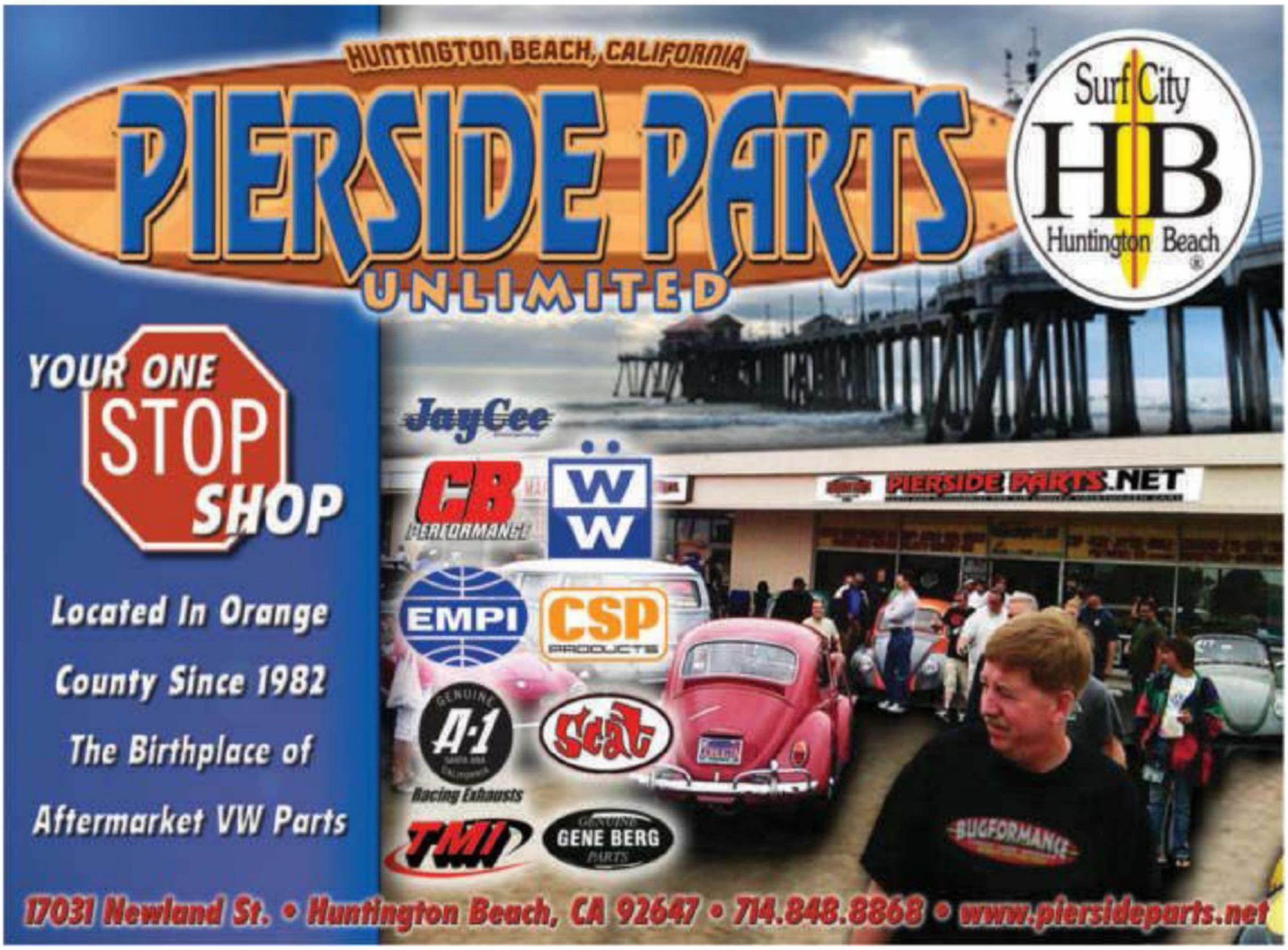
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Energy boost

Red warning light on the dash when driving? Time to investigate the charging system

Words and photos Mark Walker

Replacing a dynamo on a Type 1 engine is not as simple as replacing an alternator on a modern car. As the dynamo is coupled to the fan, and the inlet manifold and dynamo pedestal are in the way of removal, it is actually easier to take the engine out to do the swap.

As our '67 Beetle was 6V, but came with some of the 12V parts, we decided to swap the entire car to 12V electrics in the process. Controversially, we chose to stay with a dynamo, but most people will take this opportunity to swap to an alternator, doing away with the need for a remote regulator in the process. Depending on the year of car, you may need to change the top pulley and fan belt as well.

We were alerted to the lack of the dynamo charging by the red light being illuminated in the speedo. Note: later cars have two red lights, but you can check which is which by unhooking the oil pressure switch wire in the engine bay, then turning on the ignition.

Next month we will cover the remainder of the 12V conversion. ■

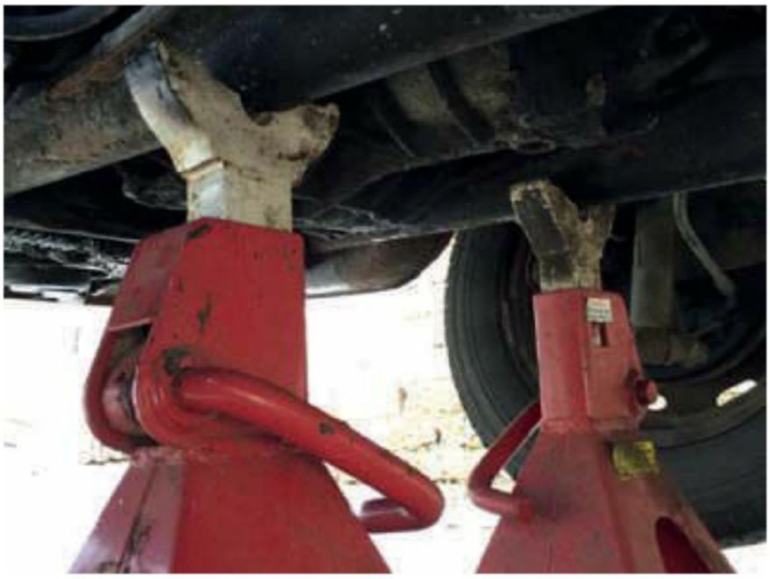
JOB INFO

TOOLS NEEDED:
Trolley jack
Axle stands
17mm ring spanner
10, 13mm sockets and spanners
Ratchet
screwdrivers – flat and cross head
8mm spanner
36mm socket on windy gun
Fuel hose clamp

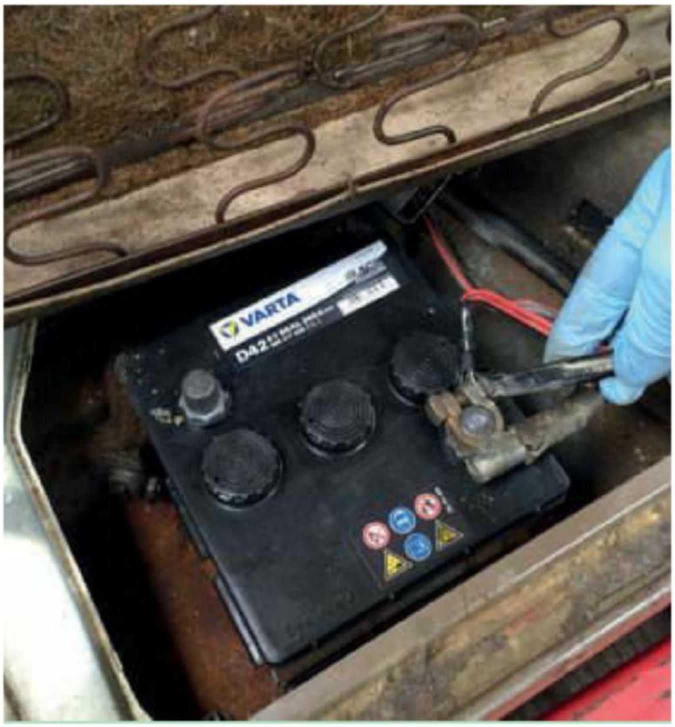
TIME TAKEN:
5-7 hours

COST DIY: £100 (exchange) for dynamo

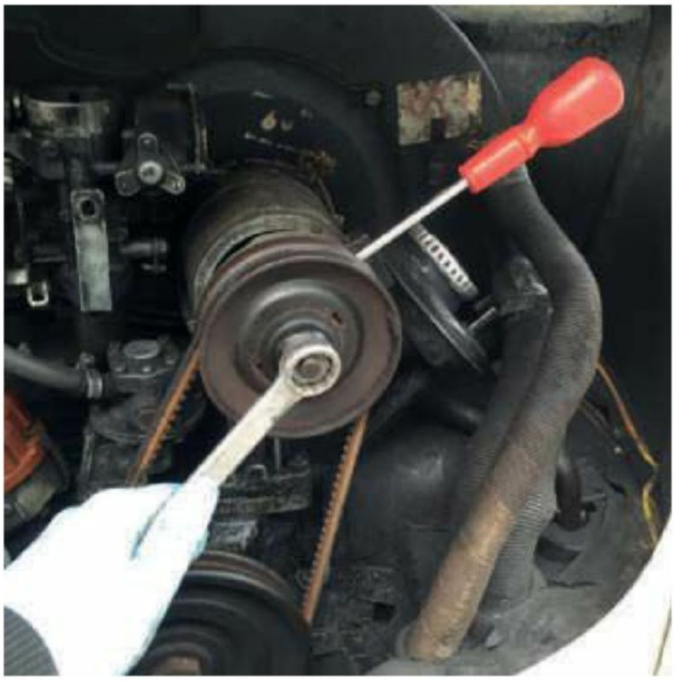
PRO: approx. £250-300 parts and labour



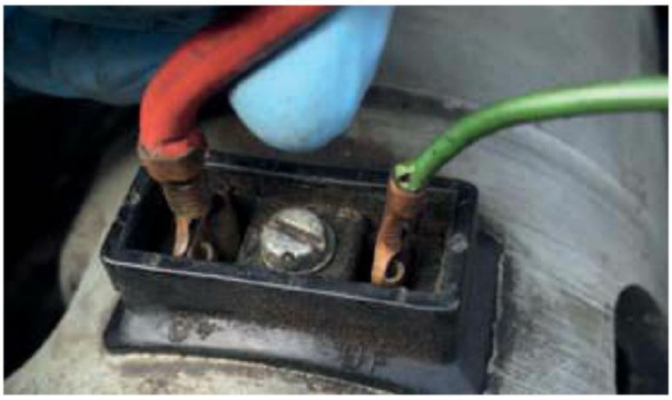
01 To remove the engine, you need to jack up the rear of the car. The aim is to place the axle stands under the torsion bars, or gearbox frame horns, where they will be out of the way. Make sure the axle stands are set to the same height and gently lower the car onto them, checking they are securely located



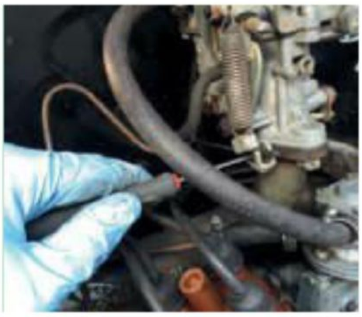
02 Before you start to do anything on the electrical system, remove the battery earth strap. This can be done by lifting the rear seat and undoing the battery strap with a 13mm spanner, then pulling it off the battery terminal and securing out of the way



03 Moving to the engine compartment now, you need to remove the fan belt, by removing the outer top pulley. To do this, use a 21mm spanner or socket on the nut and push a flat screwdriver into the notch in the pulley, so it jams against the body of the dynamo. With this done, you can undo the nut and remove the spacer, outer pulley and shims, and remove the belt itself.

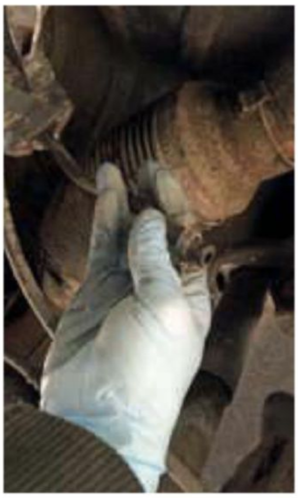


04 There are a few things you will need to do before the engine can be removed. Firstly, attend to the wiring. Remove the connections from the dynamo, coil, choke and oil pressure switch and move out of the way. You will forget where the wires go, so label them before removal



05 One thing that a lot of people forget until the engine is half way out and hanging up on it, is the accelerator cable. Undo this now from the carburettor using an 8mm spanner (if you're lucky) or a small flat screwdriver like ours if you're not so lucky. Pull the accelerator cable out of the barrel nut, too

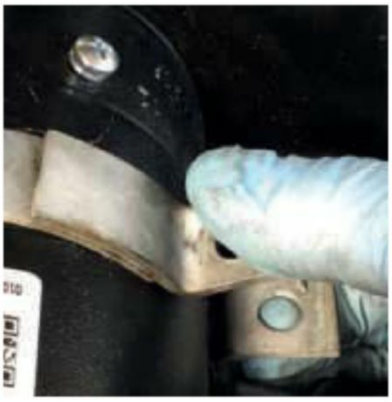
06 In a similar way to what you just did, shimmy under the car and undo the heater cables with the 8mm spanner. It is likely you will need to spray them liberally with WD40, or similar



07 My least favourite job when removing the engine is undoing the fuel line from under the car. Use a good fuel hose clamp or, failing this, Mole grips to clamp off the soft line before removing it from the steel line poking through the firewall. Once you've done this, you will have to shine a light up under the car, in order to work out what type of fuel hose clip has been used. It is likely it will be able to be undone with a screwdriver, or 7mm spanner. With this done, move your face and body out of the way before pulling the hose free. There will be a residual amount of fuel in the line, so keep your mouth and eyes closed!

08 You are now ready to begin removing the four 17mm engine nuts. Place the trolley jack under the oil strainer plate of the engine to support it before you begin. To remove the two upper nuts, reach down behind the fan housing to locate the 17mm nuts where the engine bolts to the gearbox bellhousing. If you have a later, twin-port engine (with doghouse cooling) you will only have one nut accessible from above, on the starter motor side. Undo the nuts with a 17mm ring spanner. They will (should!) be tight. I made a special tool for this by welding a long bar onto an old ring spanner.

On later cars, you will now need to remove the upper engine securing bolt from underneath. This is best accessed with a socket / ratchet combo, with an extension bar. While you're under the car, the two lower engine nuts can be accessed with the 17mm ring spanner. These are hidden inside the rear gearbox mounting bracket. With all four nuts / bolts removed, you can now wiggle the engine free and carefully lower it on the jack, once it is free of the gearbox input shaft



09 Strictly speaking, you should now raise the car high into the air to pull the engine free, but we decided to do the dynamo swap with the engine sitting on the jack. First, remove the clamp holding the dynamo to the pedestal. This is accessed with a 13mm spanner and socket. Undo the nut and slide the clamp forward out of the way

10 You will now need to check if your car still has the thermostat fitted. Look under the right side of the engine. The tinware that extends under the pushrod tubes is in two pieces on this side, to facilitate the servicing of the thermostat. Using a flat screwdriver, remove the small piece of tinware and shine a light up inside to see if the thermostat and bracket are present. Some people misguidedly remove this and weld the cooling flaps in the fan housing open, or remove them completely. This affects warm-up time and, if the flaps are removed, affects cooling during use, too.

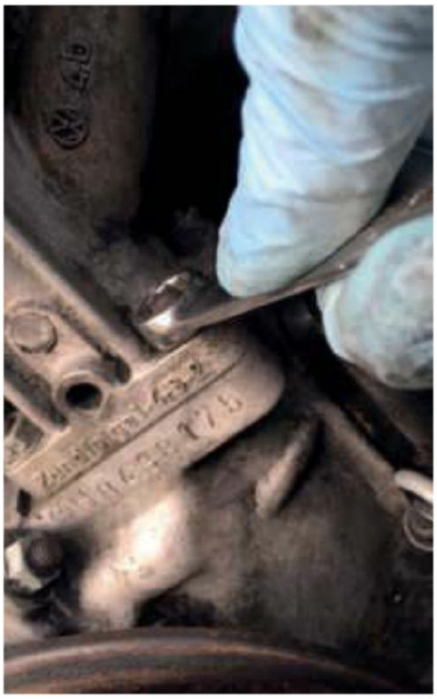
If the thermostat is present, undo and remove the 13mm bolt from underneath to release it from the bracket. Now undo the 13mm nut holding the bracket to the engine case and withdraw it. You can now unwind the thermostat anti-clockwise from the connecting rod

Change your dynamo

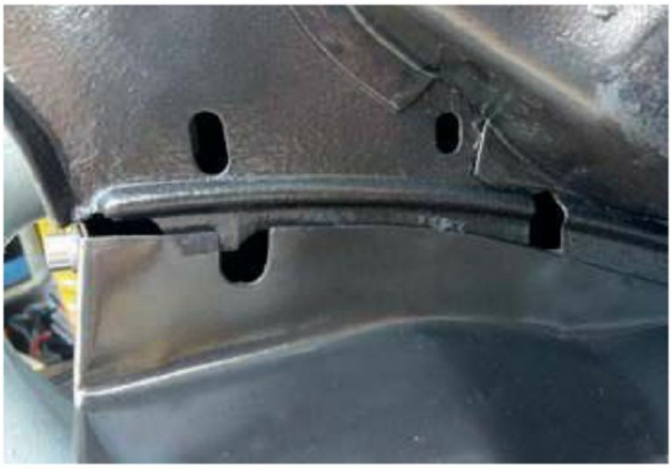
11 With the thermostat out of the way, you can now remove the fan housing. Firstly, remove the accelerator cable guide tube from the fan housing. Then remove the two screws at the lower corners, which secure the fan housing to the cylinder head tins. With this done, you can pull the fan housing upwards, off the oil cooler and away. Be careful to remove the thermostat pushrod from the cylinder head without bending it

12 With the fan housing removed and on the bench / floor remove the four 10mm bolts holding the backing plate into the fan housing, then withdraw the dynamo assembly from the front

13 Remove the fan nut with the 36mm socket. If you don't have an air-powered impact wrench, this is difficult. The only way to do it without risking damage to the dynamo spindle is to grip the fan assembly in your arm and do battle with a ratchet or breaker bar. Take note of the order in which the components come apart. You need to swap the backing plate over, by removing the two 10mm nuts from the back of the dynamo. Be careful to locate the woodruff key in the fan hub correctly. Test fit by bolting the new dynamo back into the fan housing and spinning the fan. There should be no contact / rubbing here. If there is, adjust with the shims that should be present

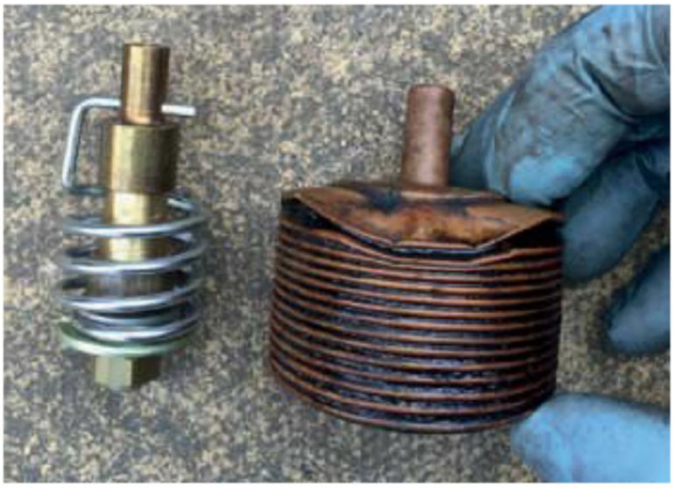


14 When you are happy with the dynamo-to-fan fit, re-fit the fan housing. If you are converting from 6V to 12V electrics, you will likely need to change the dynamo pedestal to the larger diameter 12V one. We were lucky, as our car had a 1967-only larger diameter 6V dynamo, so this wasn't necessary in our case. Changing the pedestal is achieved by removing the four nuts securing it to the top of the engine. You will need to use a new gasket / gasket sealant here to ensure it doesn't leak oil



15 When re-fitting the fan housing, take your time and ensure the pieces all fit together correctly, with the fan shroud sitting snugly inside the cylinder head tin

16 Now slide the dynamo clamp back into position and tighten the 13mm nut and bolt. It should have taken a shape from where it was fitted before, so locate it in this position again and you'll find it much easier to do the bolt back up

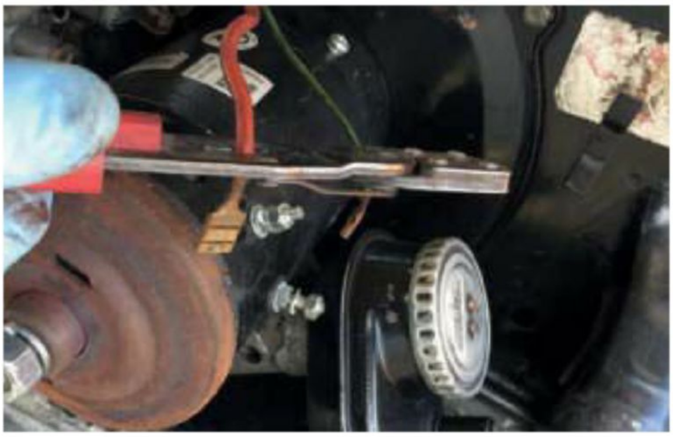


17 Working under the engine, thread the thermostat back onto the rod and re-fit the bracket. Our thermostat came out damaged, so we chose to source a replacement (shown on left). It looks totally different, but serves the same purpose. Remember to replace the small piece of tinware when you are done

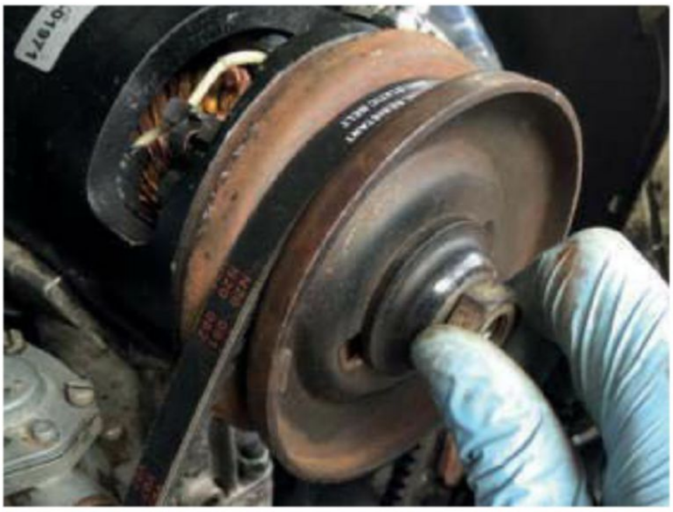
18 You can now jack the engine up and re-fit it. The easiest way to do this is to eyeball the position of the lower mounting studs and locate them in the gearbox first. With the lower studs located, jack the engine up a little bit further so the engine and gearbox mounting flanges are parallel. Make sure you have started the accelerator cable into the 'peashooter' guide tube that runs through the fan housing, then simply slide the engine into position

19 You may need to lift it by the tailpipes a little, or wiggle it from side to side. If you are struggling, it is likely the splines on the input shaft are not aligned with the clutch. If this is the case, either turn one of the road wheels slightly, or rotate the engine with a 32mm spanner on the lower pulley nut, then try again. With the engine fully home, re-fit the four 17mm engine nuts / bolts

20 Working under the car, re-fit the fuel hose, tightening the clamp so it is just tight enough not to leak. Remove the hose clamp and check for leaks. Now re-attach the heater cables and ensure the heat exchanger to body hoses are connected



21 Moving upwards, re-attach the accelerator cable to the carburettor, then re-fit all the wiring, being careful to attach the wires in their correct locations. Our charging system terminals were different on the new dynamo, so needed swapping over



22 Last job is to re-fit the fan belt. If you have converted from 6V to 12V you will need to fit a new belt. Order the correct belt for your application. You will need to ensure that the belt is neither too tight, or too slack. If it is too tight, it will prematurely wear the new dynamo bearings, too slack and it won't charge, or cool the engine properly. To tension the belt, add shims between the two pulley halves to make it slacker, or remove shims to make it tighter. With the upper pulley nut tight, you should be able to deflect the fan belt around ¾in with your thumb, or turn it easily through 45 degrees. Job done

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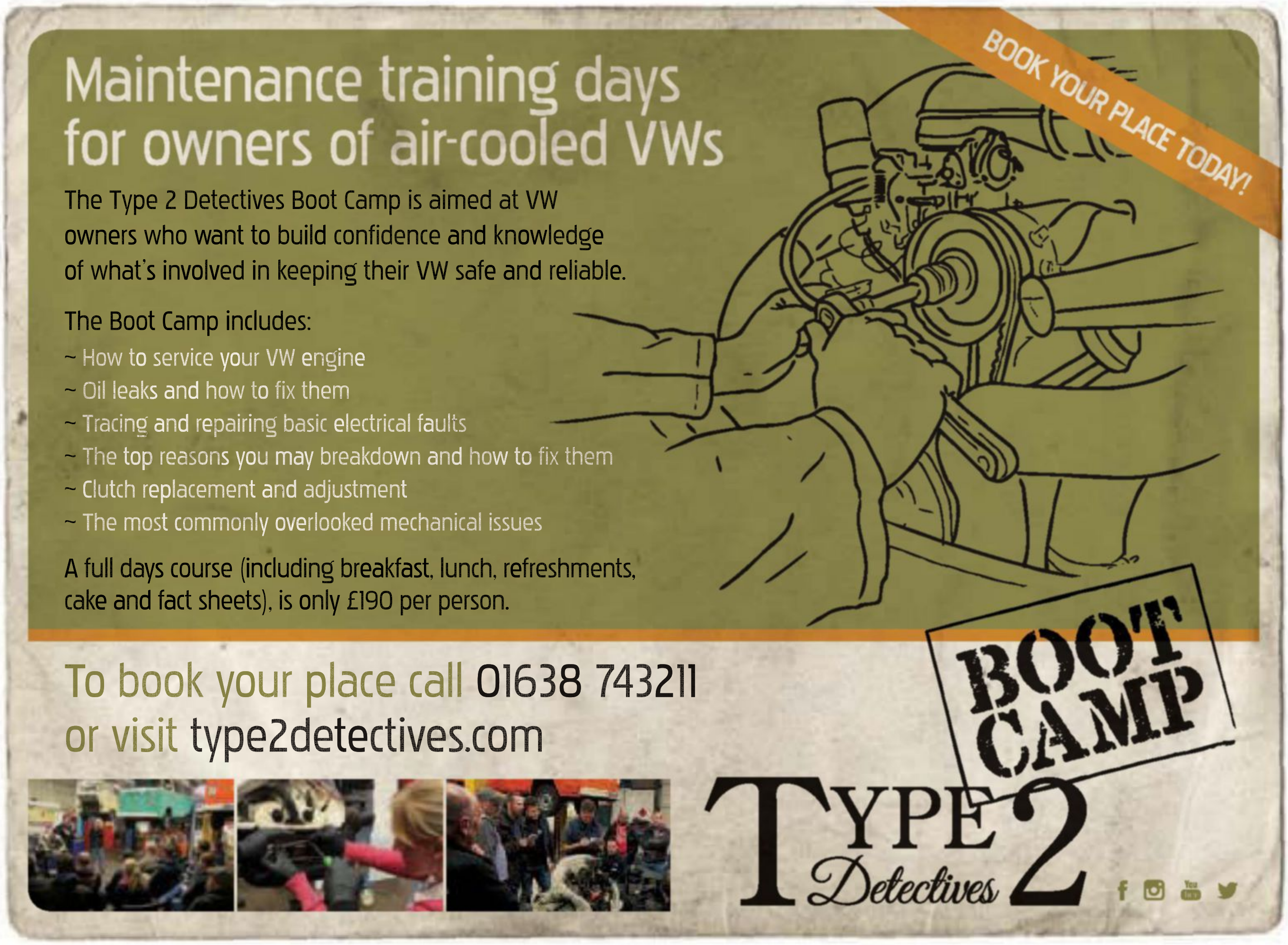

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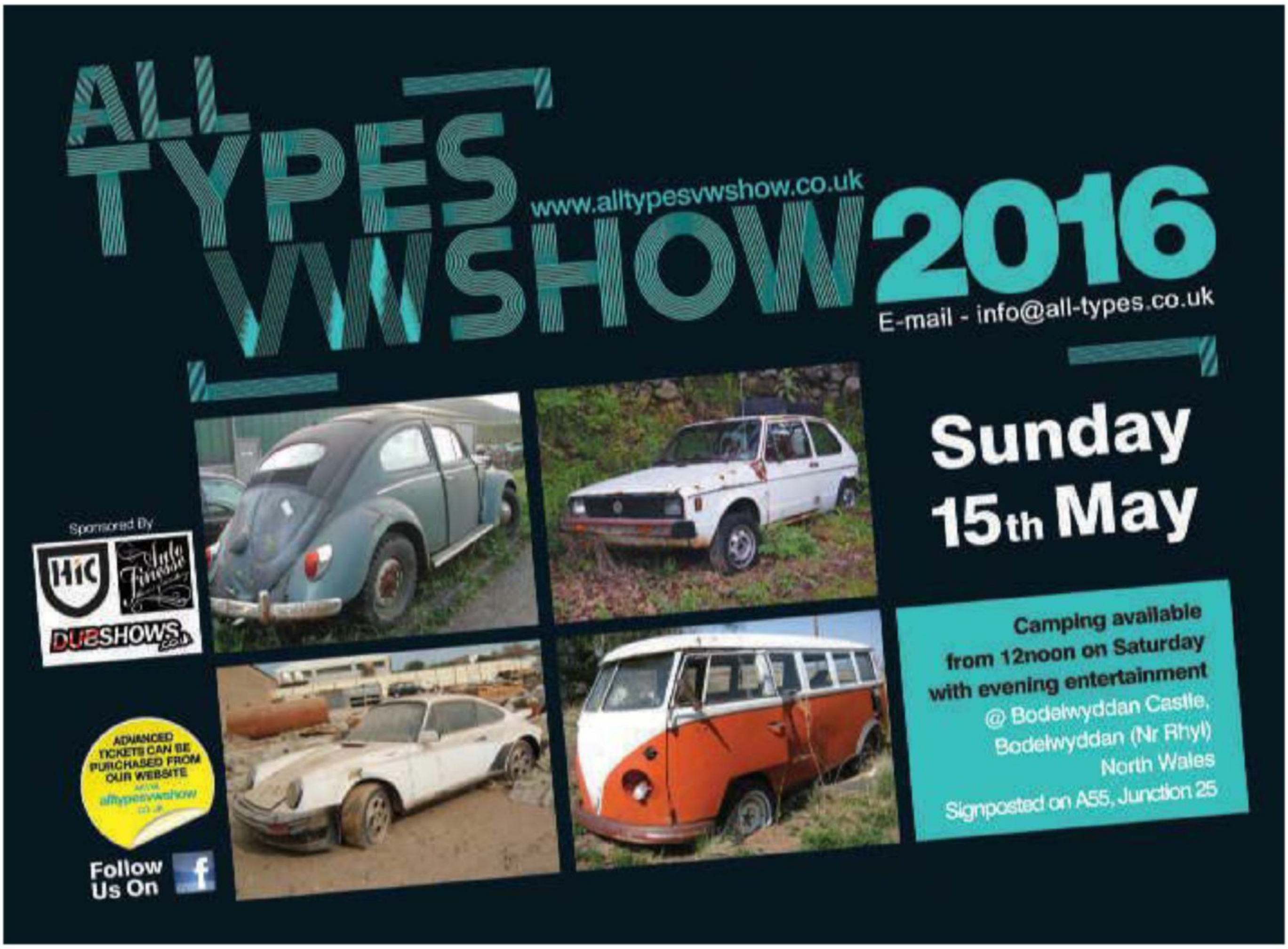

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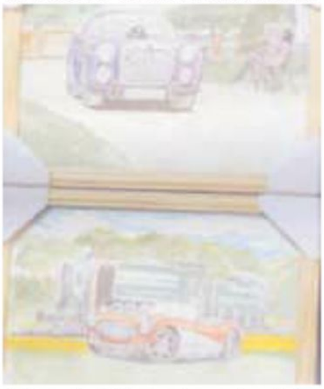

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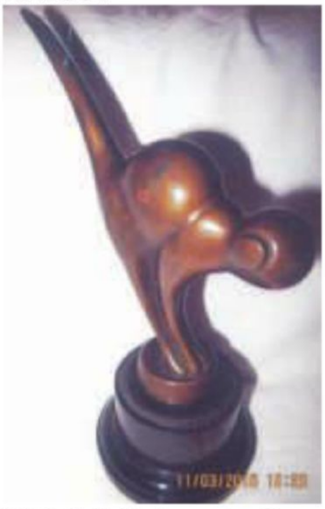

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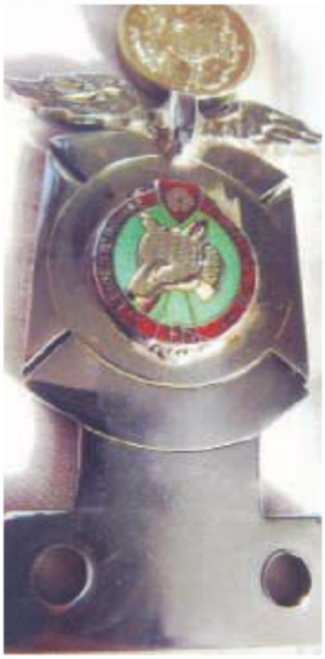

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MHO 545

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J Stuart Perkins

An Englishman selling German VWs in the USA? How very dare he?

Words
Richard Gunn

J Stuart Perkins sold more air-cooled Volkswagens in the USA than anybody else. Maybe it was the film star looks?

The British-born J Stuart Perkins was a lynch pin of Volkswagen of America for decades, helping to make the Beetle a resounding success in the country, ensuring the overall finances of the company were healthy and the dominance of its air-cooled vehicles in the US. He was one of the first three Volkswagen employees appointed in the USA, had risen to be in overall charge of Stateside operations the year when a record number of cars were sold, and also oversaw the transition from Beetle to Golf. Still, two out of three ain't bad…

Born in London in 1928, Perkins found himself in Canada in his 20s, establishing Volkswagen's presence there from his Toronto base. When the first sales office was set up in the USA in 1955, Perkins found himself summoned by then boss, Will Van de Kamp, to New York, into the heart of a nation where there were less than 6,000 Volkswagens. He arrived on Valentine's Day of that year. "We didn't have much," he recalled. "There were just the three of us, Van de Kamp, a secretary and myself, operating out of a suite in the St. Moritz Hotel on Central Park South. We had to build everything out of there."

Which they duly did. Stuart knew little about importing vehicles and ended up cold-calling ports and asking for advice. It was unconventional, but it worked, and in 1956, Volkswagen of America (VWoA) was established as the sole importer of Wolfsburg vehicles. The nominal staff rushed all over the country, desperately convincing dealers to sell the funny little German car. There was even a plan to manufacture them in the USA, which got as far as purchasing an old Packard-Studebaker plant in New Jersey, but this was sold six months later when it was realised how expensive it would be to get running. And, of course, at this stage, nobody expected the Beetle to sell that well in a nation obsessed with glitz, glamour and sheer size.

> "There were just the three of us… in the St. Moritz Hotel"

Van de Kamp was killed in a car crash in 1959 and Perkins might have been expected to succeed him at VWoA. Instead, the job went to German Carl Hahn instead. Perkins served first as his sales manager and then assistant manager, at a time when the future of Volkswagen in the USA looked so shaky that there were constant rumours it was going to be shut down completely. Nevertheless, the two men at the top in America persisted, and by 1961, 46 per cent of all foreign car imports were VWs, there were 500 dealers and 8,500 employees.

Carl Hahn went back to Germany in 1964 and at last Perkins became general manager of VWoA, rising to the position of president the following year. The quiet and diplomatic 36-year old, who instilled trust and respect in those who worked for him, continued to focus on expanding sales. He introduced an 'Action Programme' of fastidious planning and research that allowed Volkswagen to move ahead while other European car companies faltered in the States. In 1970, Volkswagen sold 569,696 cars in the USA, a record that has never been bettered. Most were Beetles, but Wolfsburg's other air-cooled products made up a significant number.

However, by this time, Volkswagen was also experimenting with front-wheel drive in the somewhat ungainly form of the K70, and the writing was on the wall for air cooling. By January 1975, Perkins was overseeing the introduction of the Rabbit (as the Americans dubbed the Golf) but fell out with the upper echelons of management over a plan to build the car in the country. He was perhaps mindful of the earlier scheme during the 1950s. Nevertheless, the Westmoreland Assembly Plant in Pennsylvania went ahead, run by a former Chevrolet manager who Perkins was less than impressed by. It got worse as that manager, James McLernon, eventually ended up as the overall president of VWoA, with Perkins downgraded to chief of the sales and marketing department and having to report to him. Small wonder that the man who had steered Volkswagen to such success in America during the 1960s and 1970s left the company for good in 1981. As for McLernon, he was eventually fired by Perkins' old mate, Carl Hahn, after he became overall chairman of Volkswagen in 1982.

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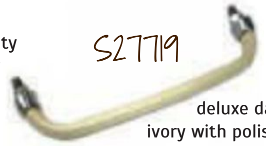

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